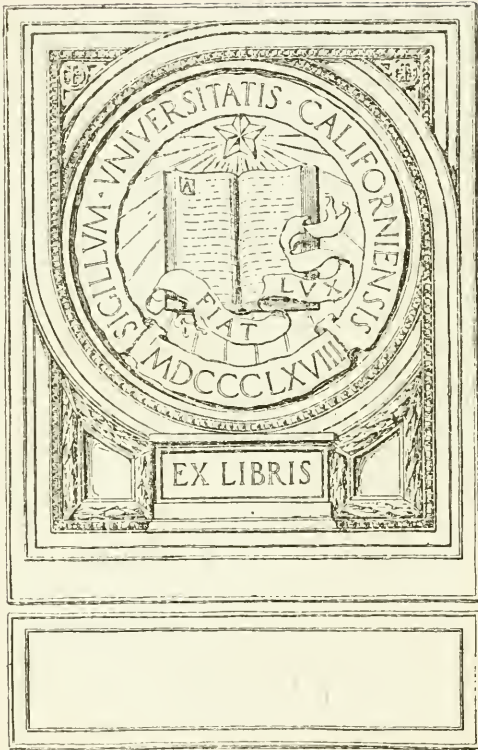




CONVERTED







FROM AUTHORITY TO FREEDOM







*From a photograph by Walter Scott, Bradford*

CHARLES HARGROVE, LITT.D.



# FROM AUTHORITY TO FREEDOM

THE SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE OF  
CHARLES HARGROVE

BY

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" Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita  
Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,  
Chè la diritta via era smarrita."

DANTE. *Inferno*, Canto 1.

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# FROM AUTHORITY TO FREEDOM

## INTRODUCTION

THE history of European thought for the last four hundred years might be described, not inaptly, as "a pilgrimage from authority to freedom." In the pages that follow this history will reduce itself to the dimensions of a single life. As the growth of a human body repeats the evolution of the race at large, so the growth of one man's mind may comprise in a few brief years a process which occupies centuries on the stage of the world.

The pilgrimage of Charles Hargrove covers about a quarter of the nineteenth century, ending in 1876. It began in an effort to find certitude, and the peace which certitude is supposed to bring, under the authority of the Bible. Failing there, the effort was repeated with yet greater determination and thoroughness in the Church of Rome. Again it failed, and the second failure was the more disastrous because for nearly ten years the pilgrim believed that in Rome he had found what he sought. After this shipwreck he abandoned the quest for absolute certainty as a goal attainable by the human mind and freely staked his soul on the high probability that Love is supreme in the universe—in other words, that there is a living God. Accepting the risks of his own fallibility, from which he believed that no escape was possible, he resolved to stand

or fall on this ground. If not *absolutely* certain there was, for him, nothing *more* certain than it.

This, strictly speaking, marks the end of his pilgrimage from authority to freedom. But it was not the end of his life. Circumstances brought him into contact with a group of Churches, commonly called Unitarian, which were willing to accept him as a religious teacher claiming no infallibility of one kind or another for the doctrine that he taught. These Churches, which refuse to make dogma the basis of their union, seemed to him to be free in precisely the same sense that he was free himself. With them he took service and continued to serve them with unabated loyalty for more than forty years, until his death in 1918.

It was in 1876 that he made his perilous resolution to stand or fall as a free man, a religious teacher unbound by dogma or authority. He believed that personal veracity is supreme among the obligations imposed upon a rational being, that it governs the whole field of thought and activity, the public teaching of religion as well as the conduct of private life. This principle neither failed him nor betrayed him. Following its guidance, he found himself able to sustain the work of a religious teacher year after year, with abounding resources and an energy and enthusiasm that never flagged. The event proves, therefore, that he *stood*, and stood firmly, to the end. In his farewell sermon of 1912, speaking of those who claim "to be absolutely certain that their thoughts about God and religion are the very truth," he says, "I have no such conviction. I have ever put my ideas before you as the best I had to offer." These words, with which he ended his ministry in Leeds, are almost the same as those which he used at its beginning.

The main interest of this pilgrimage lies in the fact that the pilgrim thoroughly explored the regions that lay in his path. He went through them and not round them. He



was not of those who take a glance at the claims of authority and then pass them by. He gave them a fair and prolonged trial. Authority was not lightly relinquished. Nor was freedom lightly assumed. It was purchased at a great price, paid down in the hard cash of suffering, and was then tested, as a working principle, by forty years of unremitting labour.

For this reason the story cannot be told in purely theological terms, nor as though abstract reasoning were the only force at work. It must be told in terms of personality as well. What we have here to do with is not merely the Truth, acting from without the man, but the *love of Truth*, acting from within the man, and the courage, or valour, which transforms the love of Truth from a sentiment into a motive. Without these personal qualities Hargrove's pilgrimage would have taken a very different course: perhaps there would have been no *pilgrimage* at all.

Other causes of a like nature were at work springing from his own temperament, or from the influence of those by whom he was surrounded. There was a family atmosphere highly charged with the traditions of a peculiar piety, which sometimes attracted but as often repelled him; there was an only brother who could never understand him; there was a father who challenged opposition by the aggressiveness of his own faith; there were chance meetings with sympathetic advisers, which often make turning-points in the history of a soul. Had any of these causes been absent, nothing would have happened as it did. The life of Hargrove was not an "acted syllogism" but a human drama.

As soon as he could understand the meaning of language he was confronted with the tremendous problem of the salvation of his soul. Forced upon him in infancy by his parents, this problem became the obsession of his youth and

so continued in various forms until he was more than thirty years of age. During all these years a great anxiety overshadowed him lest, by some error of thought or weakness of will, he should miss the path to eternal beatitude, be cast out from the presence of God, and doomed to the undying worm and the unquenchable fire.

The influence of such a training was too profound to be wholly effaced by any subsequent developments. It marked out the broad boundaries of his mental life, and made it certain that religion and theology would become a lifelong preoccupation. And, more than that, it cut the track of his mental habits in certain directions from which they never departed. The form of Protestantism in which his parents brought him up and the Roman Catholicism he adopted later on both required of him the incessant practice of self-examination. Only a sleepless vigilance could guard against the infinite wiles of the enemy, ever on the watch for the ruin of souls. For this purpose attention must be concentrated on the inward state, every thought questioned, the fluctuations of will watched over and distrusted, the changing moods noted and confessed—to God or to priest, as the case might be. Under these conditions the soul becomes an object of interest to itself, and a habit of mind is formed which subsequent changes of belief may modify but cannot break.

Accordingly we find that Hargrove never ceased to examine himself. The habit remained in being long after the dreadful anxieties had departed which had forced him to cultivate it in his earlier years. However eagerly his mind might be exercised among the interests of the outer world, his last look would be turned inwards. But it was not the gaze of self-admiration. He studied himself severely and critically; traced his motives to their roots; analysed his conduct; recorded his daily doings; and though

he no longer concluded, as he had been wont to do in boyhood, that he was the child of sin and the heir of damnation, to the last he found himself wanting and was humbled by his imperfections.

The result of this habit is seen in the diaries which cover, with few intermissions, more than sixty years of his life. So far as the later periods are concerned, one may hazard the guess that these diaries were a mode of continuing the practice of confession, which he had learnt in the Church of Rome. They express a need that he felt to place his life on record, that it might be subsequently criticised and judged. Moreover, he preserved his correspondence, copied his letters, collected material from various sources, and, towards the end of his life, wrote the first chapters of an autobiography.

Had he lived to complete the work, these first chapters of it could hardly have remained unaltered when the problem arose of adjusting their proportions to the rest. They would have been curtailed at some points and expanded at others. They carry us to 1866, when Hargrove had completed four of the ten years he spent in the Church of Rome. With certain omissions they will form the First Part of this book. For reasons to be given later, the first two chapters of the Second Part will deal with the period already covered by the autobiography and introduce new matter relating to it.

In 1866 there will come a change. In that year, when the second act of the drama was drawing to a close, and the foreshadowings of the crisis to follow had hardly appeared, the guidance of the autobiography suddenly leaves us, and thenceforward the responsibility for the narrative falls on myself.

It is perhaps more deeply true of Hargrove than of most men that every new step in his pilgrimage owed its

direction to an influence borrowed from his past. "I thank God," he wrote in 1890, "that I am what I am; I thank Him also that I was what I was." Standing among the beginnings of his life, it would have been impossible for the most prescient mind to guess the course it was destined to follow; but looking back from the end, we can see that what happened at the last is closely linked to what happened at the first. All the revolutions of his spirit are the working out of a unitary principle: their logic is the logic of destiny. Had he not been a Plymouth Brother, he would never have become a Roman Catholic; had he not been first Plymouth Brother and then Roman Catholic, he would never have become a Unitarian. He passed from authority to freedom; but freedom would never have been his had he not known what it was to yield to authority in its extremest form. Of this Hargrove himself was well aware, and the fact gives an added interest to the record he has left of his earlier years. His life in his own eyes was not the succession of broken episodes that it seemed to many, but had a deep and continuous unity beneath the storms that passed over its surface. This, I am convinced, is what he intended to portray in his autobiography, and it will be my endeavour to carry out that design.

# PART I.—AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

## CHAPTER I

### PARENTAGE

“I CAME of an English stock which had been planted in Ireland about the middle of the eighteenth century. In consequence of some love affair, and of a duel thence arising, my great-grandfather had to forfeit his commission in the Army and leave his English home. He had a son named George, who was educated at Maryborough and became a surgeon in the Navy. His ship was wrecked off Brest, and he was taken prisoner.

“In 1782 this George Hargrove, my grandfather, was settled in Limerick, practising dentistry and medicine. He became a man of high repute in the city, where he lived for fifty years. In a pompously written book, entitled *A Tour through Ireland*, by Charles Tophason Bowden, published in 1791, he is mentioned in the following terms :—

““There are a number of gentlemen in the city of considerable eminence in polite literature. Amongst these Dr O’Halloran, Dr Hargrove . . . are said to move in the highest sphere—at least fame is loud in their panegyric. There are three newspapers here. . . . I remember to have read in a London paper some fancy pieces extracted from the *Limerick Herald*, which a unity of genius and benevolence could only produce and which do infinite honour to Hargrove’s pen. He possesses the talent of giving even to trifles a something interesting

and important ; and that in a style so elegant and chaste as seems happily calculated to improve the manner and amend the hearts of his readers. . . . From his general character I will say, though I may be accounted vain for the assertion, that he is a man after my own heart.'

"It was quite in accordance with Irish fashion 130 years ago that Dr Hargrove should run away with his wife. He was 'privately married' to her, as a note in his own handwriting attests, 'on the 9th of February 1786,' and on the 29th of April following was 'publicly married under license by the Rev. William Rose at St John's Church, Limerick.' Her name was Elizabeth Langford ; she came of a good county family, and brought him more by £100 than the Irish girl's usual dower, £1000 a year for one year. She bore him three sons and three daughters, and died while they were yet children.

"They were troublous times in Ireland at the close of the eighteenth century, and many were involved against their will, and suffered sorely in mind, body and estate. Many were suspected without reason, others accused who were wholly guiltless, and Dr Hargrove came into peril in consequence of some such charge against him. There is a memorandum of his about this time as follows :—

"I now solemnly aver for the information of my Dear Children that I had nothing to do in any way with United Irishmen or their views against Government, more than my *youngest* child had. Nor had I ever any intentions of being of any Society that (had) such a measure for its object. I ever had a most independent mind and cast of thought, and from my love of truth I never clouded my sentiments on what I thought the abuses of Government and the silly adoration paid to place and power. This gave the idea to those whose views were neither so comprehensive nor so harmless that I must be concerned in

some *secret* plot, and when the unfortunate state of the times excited the most general suspicion, the silly, narrow-minded and illiberal directed an attack on me which was heightened by private dislike and I believe long existing malice. But thanks to my Great Protector, I triumphed over my enemies. From what has been such a source of vexation to me, let me caution my Boys and impress it strongly on their minds that an interference in politicks is a dangerous pursuit for the generality of people, particularly in opposition to the existing Government, be that what it may. Let people especially in the middle walks of life mind their own affairs only and leave those of the State to those to whom they are intrusted.'

"Dr Hargrove believed himself heir to a baronetcy, and a Dublin paper, of April 1810, mentions that 'Dr Hargrove of Limerick is about laying claim to an English Baronetcy, dormant upwards of fifty years.' He made a journey to London for the purpose of investigating or prosecuting his claim.

"He retired from practice, probably about 1830. He was residing at Southampton in 1831, and died at Mount Pleasant, Dublin, in September 1836. By his will, dated 21st December 1835, he left the sum of £4600 which 'the Great Giver of all good enabled me, by fair honourable pursuits, with economy and good management, to acquire.' His wife's portion had all gone, £300 having been lost on the newspaper, and the rest spent on the eldest son, in paying his apprenticeship fee and 'foolish debts' contracted by him. It was not a big sum, but no descendant of his has up to now been equally successful in business.

"The following notice of his death, presumably written by his son Charles, appeared in the *Limerick Chronicle* for 24th September 1836 :—

““At his residence, Mount Pleasant, Dublin, George Hargrove, Esq., M.D., formerly of this city, of which he was for many years a highly esteemed inhabitant. Dr Hargrove was a gentleman of considerable literary attainment and great urbanity of disposition. He was given, however, to count all things here but as dross, compared to the excellency of the knowledge of the crucified and risen Saviour, in the faith of whose finished work, as being alone all his salvation and all his desire, he joyfully bad adieu to this transitory scene.’

“There is no evidence that his religious views were of the kind indicated by this paragraph, until late in life, when he would seem to have come under the influence of the deep piety of his youngest son and to have accepted the evangelical faith.

“This son, Charles Frearson, born on the 16th of December 1792, was my father. He was destined for the medical profession, and probably served some while as apprentice to his father. In the session of 1814–1815 he was at Edinburgh, then the chief school of medicine in the kingdom, engaged in the study of anatomy and surgery, then one class, and chemistry. At this time he was like the generality of young men of his day, devoid of religious principles and inclined to a life of pleasure. But now something happened. Was it a ‘resurrection’ party apprehended while engaged in removing a freshly buried body from its grave for use in the dissecting room—a not improbable incident? At any rate, some of his boon companions suffered sentence of transportation. Their disastrous doom and his own escape made a deep impression upon him, and he resolved to abandon the study of medicine and devote himself to the ministry of the Gospel.

“But I have no doubt that his ‘conversion,’ as he would have termed it, was due much more to the influence of one



whom he had known all his life, and who was destined to be his partner till near the end. The rector of Newcastle, near Limerick, was then the Rev. Thomas Locke, who had succeeded his father in the charge of that and two adjoining parishes many years before. The fortune of the family had been made by the marriage of the elder Thomas Locke, a scholar of Westminster and graduate of Christ Church, Oxford, with a Miss Clack, whose sister was Countess of Devon. So the Earl gave the livings attached to his Irish estate to his brother-in-law, and at his death they passed to his son, the Earl's nephew. They were of considerable value, £1200 a year, worth twice the sum in England of the present day. There was only one church to the three parishes, and as there were very few Protestants there was only one service a week, on the Sunday morning.

“Mr Thomas Locke, the second in succession, had married Aphra Langford, a stepsister of the wife of Dr Hargrove; among his many children was Elizabeth, born 26th of August 1797, and between her and her cousin Charles there was an early attachment. There used to be a story of her having refused an offer from an Irish peer, and saying, ‘I will never marry anybody but Charles Hargrove, and I will never marry him while he holds the religious views he does.’ She was a woman of deeply religious temperament, and inevitably adopted the only form of religion which among Irish Protestants seemed then to have some depth and earnestness. She often said that had she been a Roman Catholic she would have become a nun, but, having been brought up to regard Romanism with abhorrence, there was no opening left for the development of her piety except in the evangelical party. One can imagine how the influence of this girl affected the medical student, and was a restraining force upon him in his wildest moods. One story is told which shows that young as she

then was, a girl of seventeen at the most, she gave to her lover courage and constancy when most tempted. It was a drinking party, or perhaps after dinner when the ladies had retired. The punch bowl was passed round, but one guest had had enough and declined it. 'By God, Hargrove,' said the host, hospitable after the fashion of his day, 'you shan't leave this room till you have drunk your share,' and at the same time ran to the door and locked it, and put the key in his pocket. His guest rushed to the window and leapt out. It was not then accounted any disgrace to a young man if he finished up the day under the table, but it was the thought of Bessie Locke and her sorrow and reproof which made him bold to face the charge of being sour and unsociable.

"He matriculated at Trinity College, Dublin, and took the degree of B.A., but never proceeded further as he considered the master's degree given without study to be a piece of ostentation. He then sought ordination, but a difficulty presented itself as the religious opinions he professed were very unacceptable among the higher clergy and bishops. I have been told that three bishops refused him, but I doubt the accuracy of the story. It does not seem likely that the bishops would have troubled themselves about a juvenile candidate's views so long as he duly subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.

"He was first curate to his future father-in-law, but removed in 1822 to the Diocese of Tuam. The Archbishop, Dr Power le Poer Trench, was introduced to the young and zealous clergyman by Dr Galbraith, the Vicar of Tuam, who had met him in Dublin, 'admired his character, and pitied him as one who had been the subject of persecution for the truth's sake.' On the 22nd of November 1822 the Archbishop appointed him to the perpetual curacy of Turlough, in the union of Castlebar. Here his labours

were incessant and efficient. His preaching was powerful, his lectures many, his schools superintended with diligence and care, his visits to the poor unceasing, and his general activity beyond praise. His attendance at the clerical meetings was constant ; and his appearance amongst them was always hailed with delight by the Archbishop and his brethren. 'The playfulness of his manner, the ardour of his zeal, and the intimacy of his acquaintance with the divine writings made him an invaluable acquisition at these meetings. He was an universal favourite.' So writes one who emphatically condemned him as a subsequent seceder from the Established Church.<sup>1</sup> In 1830 the Archbishop promoted him to the Rectory of Kilmena, a village four miles out of Westport.

"There was no church in the village, and he had to live at Westport ; but he was not content to absolve himself of the duties of his office on the ground that though in charge of a parish he had scarcely a parishioner who acknowledged him, and no place of worship to which he might invite the few who were favourably disposed. Regarding the religion of his people as a baleful superstition—'the poor Roman Catholics,' I have often heard him say, as one might say 'the poor convicts,' or 'the poor slaves'—he felt himself bound to do all he could to enlighten them, and took a cabin in the parish for holding services, and kept one Dominick Brown there as Scripture-reader. Indeed, this man he maintained for many years in Kilmena, and I suppose till his death, and his name and the quarterly reports of his work in promoting Protestant Christianity in the parish were familiar to us as children. Nor was he content with his sphere of duty as rector, but worked enthusiastically for the 'Irish Home Mission Society,' and was mainly instrumental in starting the Mission Station in

<sup>1</sup> Dr Sirr, *Life of the Last Archbishop of Tuam*, 1845, p. 217.

the Isle of Achill which is still flourishing, or rather which still keeps up a repute for respectability and prosperity in the midst of the most miserable surroundings. When I visited the island in 1880<sup>1</sup> I found my name at once recognised, and curiosity awakened as to whether I was the son of the man they knew and loved so well forty-five years ago. They sang Moody and Sankey's hymns in the hotel kitchen all the evening, concluding, as I was afterwards told, that if I was the right man, that was the right way to draw me. They had not enough experience of the world to know how risky is the deduction that because the father was an enthusiast on this or that side, the son will be of the same mind. Perhaps the more he shares the father's enthusiasm the less likely will he be to accept his opinions.

“But neither his methods nor his thoughts were ever really consonant with the staid respectability of the work and formulæ of the Established Church. It was not only that he had difficulties about using one or other expression in the Prayer Book services, it was the hypothesis which underlay it all to which he objected. He believed in the Church as a body of elect individuals chosen of God's good will out of the midst of a perishing world. Mankind were divided into the converted few and the unconverted multitude. The converted might be, and often enough were, poor creatures, weak and ignorant, and narrow and sinful, but they were ‘the Lord's people,’ bought with His precious blood and very dear to Him. The unconverted were ‘children of wrath,’ and the only message which it availed anything to preach to them was not repentance but belief. ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, accept the atonement He has made for you, put off all thought of saving yourself by anything you can do or feel, and trust Him wholly.’ This was the gospel for the sinful world. The

<sup>1</sup> Hargrove was then a Unitarian minister.—L. P. J.

'Church,' on the contrary, in all its formularies assumed that its members, *i.e.* the multitude of the baptized, stood on an equal footing before God, all were supposed to have the same faith, all to stand in need of the same confession of sin. He was wont for some time to omit the words which in the Baptismal Service follow immediately on the sprinkling, 'seeing now that this child is regenerate'; but he was brought more and more to recognise that the doctrine these words enunciate is assumed throughout the Book of Common Prayer. It is the baptized, not the converted, who constitute the Church, who confess together their sinfulness, together receive absolution, are partakers together of the Lord's Supper. He was as yet in the Established Church, and an ordained minister doing the work of the Church, but his dissent was fundamental. It had regard not merely to occasional formulæ or ceremonies which might be got over with a little legitimate freedom of interpretation, it was the constitution of the society which he called in question.

"But would a society, tolerant as this had always been of many forms of doctrine, tolerate among its own officials a protest against the official view? He might no doubt preach unhindered, as did indeed many of his colleagues, that 'except a man be born again he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,' and he might insist that this new birth was the work of the Spirit to which the man consciously yielded himself, and was in no wise accomplished by baptism of the unconscious child; but might he then omit the words which seem to assert the contrary, and that in plainest terms? He wrote to his good Bishop, confessing that he had been doing so, and asking whether he might with safe conscience continue so to do. The question admitted but of one answer. 'No,' wrote the Archbishop, 'I knew what you now tell me, and regret that you should have

referred the difficulty to me, but as you have done so, I have no choice but to reply that as a clergyman of the Church you are bound to the letter of her formularies.'

"Such is the story which I was told as a child, but the great changes which make or mar a man's life do not, as a rule at least, depend upon single incidents, nor are they brought about by isolated arguments. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration has always been repudiated by Evangelicals as unscriptural, and with impunity so far as the courts of law were concerned, and without any scruple of conscience. That the words fairly admitted of another interpretation than that which seemed obvious to the High Churchman was certain, and no clergyman otherwise well affected to the Church would have left it because he had to use a phrase which neither his Bishop nor his colleagues in the ministry interpreted as implying a belief in a spiritual change effected in the infant by the pouring on of water and pronouncing a form of words.

"It was about this time that the Plymouth Brethren had their obscure beginning. John Nelson Darby, a man of high intelligence and intense devotedness combined with a domineering personality, was the leading spirit of the movement in Ireland. I have no doubt my father fell under his influence, and that this caused him to take the step of resigning his living and separating himself from the Established Church. It was a momentous decision for us who were, in course of time, to be born and to be brought up in a strange religious isolation and in very straitened circumstances. From this time to his death, 1837 to 1869, he was almost entirely dependent 'on the Lord.' He would never consent to receive a salary as 'a minister of the Gospel,' nor a fee for 'preaching the Word.' Money was sent to him from time to time by such as 'the Lord moved to consider the wants of His servant,' but he never asked for

anything, and would have abhorred hinting that it would be welcome.

“I have no doubt the trial was often sore, especially to the wife and mother, but she was a brave woman with absolute trust in her husband. ‘If she had held up her little finger against it, I would not have gone,’ he said, towards the close of life, after she had passed away. And indeed her action was heroic, all the more so that it was deliberate, not a risking of life on a generous impulse, but a surrender of herself and her children, of all that went to make life easy and agreeable, thence onwards. There was on the one hand a comfortable home, a fair income, a good position and every prospect of advancement, and four little children. On the other, an Irish girl’s marriage portion—perhaps £50 a year—and ‘trust in the Lord.’ But ‘the Lord had shown the way,’ and so far as I have ever heard, there was no hesitation on her part about following it, rough and unpleasing though it might be.

“So in the spring of 1837 they were established in lodgings at Dublin, where a fifth child was born, and died after seven months. And now they began a wandering life, journeying about with the little family in days when travel was very different from what it is now, guided by ‘the Lord’s call.’ Wherever the Lord’s people were gathered, separate from the world and the world’s ways of worship, and sought the help of His servant, thither he went. In 1838 another child was born to them at Hereford; Aphra was the Christian name of her maternal grandmother and others of the family; they were fain to give it to her, but it was not to be found in the Bible, so it was altered to Apphia, the name of ‘the sister’ who is one of those whom Paul greets in his Letter to Philemon. The next year they buried a son, seven years old, at Leamington. In 1840 they were in London; in 1841 at Manchester, where they

buried another son ; afterwards for a while at Birmingham and at Stafford ; they were at Ipswich in 1843, where was born Joseph, the last of the family, who died in 1914. He was for thirty-five years a devoted minister of the Church which his father left, and became Honorary Canon of Ely. We grew up together, went to the same school and the same university. Of the nine children, five died in childhood, and one at the age of twenty ; Bessie, who married a clergyman, the younger son of Mr Justice Hill, died at thirty-four, leaving three little boys behind.



## CHAPTER II

### CHILDHOOD

“It was at Clapton in North London that I came into the world on the 4th of July 1840. In the previous December a brother named Charles had died, and I succeeded to my father’s name. I was piously accepted of my parents, no doubt. I could not have been desired. There were four children living, the eldest, Thomas, a boy of twelve, already in a decline, the youngest not two years old. All of them delicate. There was no home, and in my infancy I must have had such experience of travel as falls to the lot of few of such tender age.

“But the situation seems to have become unbearable when my mother was taken ill some time in 1842, and the troublesome baby boy was sent off with a nurse, ‘a sister in the Lord,’ to her home at Hereford. It was to have been only for a short time, but it lasted for some five years, and I came to self-consciousness and grew out of infancy knowing nothing of my parents or family. This nurse or housekeeper or perhaps humble friend was a widow, and I suppose it was through the brethren that she was set up as teacher of a school for poor children, or orphans, for it must have been a fair-sized house we lived in. The first impression I retain in memory is significant of much which followed. I was lost—so it seemed to me—in a great strange house and bleating as a lamb for its mother.

“‘An infant crying in the night :  
An infant crying for the light :  
And with no language but a cry.’

“How little I remember of those years when I was learning day by day of this great strange world into which I had come! Observing the kitchen fire burning as it seemed not only in the grate but outside in the garden, reflected as it was in the imperfect window-pane. Secretly appropriating what I thought was a sugar-plum, one of several in a small round box: oh, the disgust when I chewed it! Eating unripe fruit in the garden and something that followed after, but I don't know what. The removal to another house on the bank of the river. The delightful excitement of the river rising and flooding our kitchen. The shortest morning of my life when I and a little girl playmate found a dead mouse and pretended it was this and that, till, to our astonishment, we were called in to dinner. The dingy little front parlour where we had dinner and I got into trouble, the like of which I have been in all my life, because I wouldn't eat meat. My earliest impression of scenery, viewing from somewhere lower down the river the Wye's steep tree-grown banks.

“More vivid far were my earliest religious impressions. ‘The Room’ was the place of worship, but I remember nothing about it except the name and what seemed to me its great size. I know I wanted to be ‘converted’ and go to heaven and sing ‘Glory, glory, glory,’ as I had heard some little child did when it was dying.

“It was in the springtime of 1847 that I was called home. For now my father had at last settled down and taken a house in St John's Wood, then on the outskirts of London. A friend was found to take charge of me at least as far as Bristol, where we journeyed by coach. There I was taken to visit my elder sister, who was at a boarding school at Clifton, and I brought shame upon her by my vulgar manners. My next remembrance is of meeting my mother, a strange lady of course to me,—as indeed!

must have been a stranger to her, who had parted with me when I was but two years old.

“I was brought home and made the acquaintance of the family—an invalid brother of twelve, a sister a year and a half older than myself, and a little brother of three. I was certainly not an engaging child, and no one could have been very glad to welcome me. I cried for my old nurse, Mrs Vaughan, who had loved and petted me,—‘Meawn’ I called her,—and I was reprovèd for my perversity and baby ways. And then I had been brought up among poor children, and I spoke after their manner and left out all aspirates. My mother was rightly afraid lest my small brother and sister should pick up my various vulgarities, and I was not allowed to play with them till I had been trained and chided into some semblance of gentility. I don’t think this took very long, but I suffered for years by comparison with my little brother, who was a pretty little boy and as the youngest was made much of. I was never jealous of him—it never has been in my nature to be jealous of anyone, I would I were as free from other and perhaps worse sins. ‘Who are you?’ said a lady to me at a children’s party. I was staggered for a moment at a question I had never been asked before, then recollected myself and answered, ‘I am Josie’s brother.’ The story was told by her, and I remember the amusement over it at the breakfast-table.

“I don’t think it did me any harm that I was so early made conscious of inferiority to one who in other respects was my equal. It has made me willing to recognise my superiors, among juniors as well as seniors, all my life, and I have had abundant occasion for such recognition.

“Moreover, I was no doubt a troublesome child, and made more so by the assumption that I was more than others naughty and untruthful and undeserving of the

affection I pined for. Certainly I was not happy. 'O wretched man that I am!' I remember saying to myself many a time when smarting under the sense of unjust suspicion and undeserved punishment. My father left all to my mother. To us he was like a god, feared and hallowed, the best and wisest of men, we were quite sure, but not approachable except on rare occasions that he graciously stooped for a few minutes to our level. And access to him was much easier for brother and sister than for poor little me who had nothing to recommend me. My mother, dear good holy soul, devoted herself to us children, and I owe everything to her. But I was a difficult problem, and she did not understand it.

"It was in an atmosphere of the strictest piety that my earlier years were spent. We had two servants, but our home and living was of an extreme simplicity. We were not 'of the world,' and the world's pleasures and superfluities were unbecoming to our position. There was not a picture on our walls, not an ornament on the mantelpiece. We were very poor for people living in a house of £50 a year, and only the strictest economy of a capable housewife carried us through. But we were not bred to wish for money or the things money would buy, and I have no doubt if we had been possessed of wealth we should have lived in much the same way, and all that was over would have gone 'in the Lord's work.'

"Our religion was mainly Bibliolatry, the worship of the Bible as the Word of God. As soon as we learnt to read, a copy was given to each of us, and as we grew up we took it with us wherever we went, to school or on holiday. I remember well the feeling of doing something wicked and perilous when I ventured for the first time—but that was years afterwards—to go somewhere without one. It was read every day in family worship and then again as a

regular lesson, and we were urged to read and ponder it in private, and did so occasionally when unhappy or frightened or religiously inclined. No other book was ever allowed to be placed upon it. We were taught that every word of it was inspired by God, that it was His Book. And then we were told that certain doctrines were plainly stated in it which no reader of it could deny except because he did not wish to find them there. I think as they impressed my infant mind they came in this order :—

“First, that I was a dreadful sinner, just as bad as it was possible to be. I once busied an idle hour in calculating how many sins I should commit in a day if I committed so many every minute, I forget whether a hundred or a thousand. I thought this was very much under the mark, for I was accustomed to hear my sinfulness described in language which left no room for exaggeration. I remember well my father’s expression in a sermon of a later date—speaking of the happiness of the children of God, he said, ‘but as for you poor sinners every word you speak is sin, every act you do is sin, every thought you think is sin.’ So I really believed that my sins were past all computation. Nevertheless here was an attempt at an estimate which, joined with a confession of its inadequacy, I felt was not without merit, and I showed my mother the enormous figure with some pride. When I was told that it was impossible to commit so many sins in a minute I felt humiliated at not being so monstrously depraved as I had imagined.

“Secondly, and as a just and natural consequence, came Hell. It was the fit and only place for sinners, and it was their doom to be tormented there for ever and ever. If I died as I was, and I might die at any time, I should go straight to Hell. Impressible as I was, this belief, which I held most firmly, did not trouble me except when now and

again I got a fright by reason of a sermon or a death or a dream. And I think this is generally so. The belief in Hell has been universal. The effect of it to terrify or to convert has been of little account.

“Thirdly came Conversion, the only way of escape from Hell. For us the whole of mankind were divided into the Unconverted and the Converted or Believers. To the former class almost everybody, including us children, belonged. To the latter, our parents and their few intimates. So it was a common question with us, Is so-and-so converted?—though we were not encouraged to ask it; and when I did ask it of the Duke of Wellington at the time of his death, I was reprovèd for doing so, though why it was not a proper question, I could not understand. And what was it to be converted? It was to believe in Jesus, to accept Him as your Saviour, to be washed in His blood. How often I longed to be converted, to be saved! ‘I would gladly be a slave for life if only I could find the Lord,’ I said, and sincerely. But it was the work of the Holy Ghost and could not be brought about by personal endeavour, though prayer and reading the Bible might help to it. At times I thought or hoped, under the influence of some religious emotion, that I was really converted, but this was at a later time, and the feeling soon passed away. As a child it could not be expected of me, and I was fairly content as I was. Even the sister who was ten years my senior was unconverted, and I imagine it would have been thought presumption in me to assume a place beside my father and mother and apart from the rest.

“That Jesus was God and had come on earth to pay the penalty of our sins, because in no other way could the Justice of the Father be appeased, was of course another familiar doctrine. Indeed, I have heard my mother

say that we should not be judged for our sins, Jesus having made atonement for them, but only for the unbelief which refused to accept Him : though indeed I was conscious that, so far from refusing, I always longed to do so.

“ This was, I imagine, about the whole of my religious belief. And beneath it and apart from it was the tacit assumption of the truth of Natural Religion. God is, and God is good, and I must be good ; and if I do wrong I offend Him, and I must pray for pardon and He would forgive me. To lie, to disobey, to hate, these were the chief forms of wrongdoing—something quite distinct from theological ‘ sin,’—and to be truthful and kind and good were pleasing to God, though from another point of view I was hateful in His sight, and Hell was my doom.

“ The good God be thanked for it that few are wholly true to their creeds. They believe with their minds what their souls disallow, and so are happily inconsistent, who if they were consistent would be harsh and cruel and unjust.

“ Sundays were happy days with us, and I used to be sorry when they came to an end. Except when my father had a ‘ room ’ in Gower Street we had no regular place of worship. If he preached anywhere—and he went wherever he was asked—we went too, if it was not very far, and all of us delighted to hear him. He preached without notes, with great earnestness and simplicity, often for over an hour, yet I do not remember ever to have tired of listening.

“ He would never accept a fee. I remember my embarrassment when a sovereign was put into my little hand on one occasion after a sermon. Of course I showed it to my mother : it was taken as kindly intended, and after consultation they decided not to return it, but, as a compromise, buy with it a gold or gilded egg-spoon for the

use of him whose services it was meant to recognise. More often he was away from home or not engaged to preach, and then we were allowed to go anywhere where 'the Gospel was preached.' He never went himself, as he was too deaf to hear, and my mother never went if he were not preaching.

"In the afternoon we were allowed to play 'Tabernacle,' and, having all the furniture in cardboard and the curtains, and bricks to build with, we enjoyed it just as well as we did building houses on weekdays. Then there was the Book of Esther, which was both a good story and God's Word, and *Pilgrim's Progress*, with judicious skippings, and the *Holy War*, and bits of Josephus, so that we got on well, and I do not remember at this time that I was ever bored by the Sabbath.

"It must have been some time in the late forties that a room was hired for my father in Gower Street, and hand-bills printed stating that 'The Gospel would be preached by Charles Hargrove on Sunday mornings.' I do not know how long these services lasted, or why they came to an end. But I have a clear remembrance of them; and long after I came to the conclusion that if St Paul had come down for a Sunday in London it is here that he would have felt himself at home.

"The room I recognised thirty years later when I found myself there for a dance, and I saw what was the purpose of the small gallery at one end which used to puzzle me as a child, for there sat the musicians, as no doubt they did on weekdays at that earlier date.

"The service was of the simplest possible. There was no form, no prescribed order, no choir, no proper sermon. My father, not dressed in a way to distinguish himself from any other man of his class in life, sat at a table on which were placed a loaf of bread and a bottle of wine, with a



plate and knife and tumbler. One or more hymns were sung, anyone who could leading ; there was a long prayer, 'an exposition of the Word,' and then 'the breaking of bread,' in which of course only 'the Lord's people' participated, the bread and wine passing from one to another through the room. This we always watched with interest. Those who partook were known to us by name at least, and I remember on one occasion our curiosity being aroused by a lady who was supposed to be converted not partaking when her turn came. I fancy the number who came was very few—fifty or sixty perhaps, including the unconverted. But numbers were never talked of, so far as I know. Those came 'whose hearts the Lord moved to join His people in worship,' and whether they were many or few was for Him to determine.

"My mother took entire charge of our education till the time came for me to learn Latin, and I had to get a private tutor. We learnt, with her, reading and writing and history in Mrs Markham's entertaining book, and arithmetic, and, besides these, astronomy, in Pinnock's *Catechism*, for which last I have been ever thankful.

"When I was eleven some friends began to think of a school for me, and arranged to pay for me at one which had just been opened at Wimbledon by a Scotch gentleman, George Murray, who had been master at the High School, Edinburgh, and had come south, after the manner of his countrymen. It was from himself I first heard the story how Hugh Miller had observed that even the fossils he found in Scottish soil had their heads turned southward. The school was very select, and no boys were accepted whose fathers were in trade. It would have been entirely beyond our private means ; and when Mr Murray understood the circumstances he declined to accept the offers made to him on my father's behalf, and took me

in, boarded and educated me for eight years, refusing every offer made to him, and on one occasion that my father managed to scrape together £100 and sent it to him, he returned it.

“All this I knew well, and it was duly impressed upon my mind, but I cannot say that I had any sense of gratitude for his kindness till long years after. I have often said that gratitude is the rarest of virtues, and I have worried over the ingratitude of those whom I thought owed much to me. But when I reflect on this gross instance of it in my own case, I see that it is mostly due to an insensibility to the value of favours received. I never realised as a schoolboy that I owed anything to my chief benefactor, any more than a child does that he is indebted to his parents. Of course it was to my father, and not to myself, that the favour was shown, but I thought nothing of it one way or another.

“My school days were not happy, often enough in the earlier years quite miserable. For better and for worse I was not like other boys, and there is no toleration at school for eccentricity. All must conform to a certain accepted type, which no doubt varies with circumstances, but, where and while it holds, has all the force of law. The code prescribes dress and manners and habits and opinions and language and religion, and departure from it is more severely punished in lesser things than in great. My younger brother and I were the poorest boys in the school, the worst dressed, the worst off for pocket-money, and so we suffered in many ways through no fault of our own. But these were pardonable offences. What made us contemptible in the eyes of the others was that we were physically weak and incapable. We could neither fight nor run, nor play as they did.

“The consequence of this and the like defects was that

we were out of all games which had public approval ; we were loafers and loungers in the play fields, too glad if by any contrivance we could escape with two or three others like-minded and play some game of our own contriving in which balls, big or little, had no part. Best of all for me was it if I could win the favour of one of the masters and walk and talk with him while the others played. Or, failing that, hide myself somewhere in the deserted school-room or out of bounds on the common among the gorse, and spend the time with a book. Nay, I remember how for many Saturday afternoons I found the peace I needed in a large old-fashioned W.C. where I could shut myself in and read without fear of a reproof from the usher or a blow or sneer from other boys.

“No, they were not happy, my school days, and I often pity the poor little boy, so ill equipped for the rough give-and-take of boy life. In the earlier years I was horribly homesick each time I returned to school, and I have often thought the greatest sorrow of my life—and I have had not a few—was this homesickness. I was so lonely, so despised. I had not one real friend among some eighty boys. I got on well enough in class ; but in the playground or within bounds on the common, I was as a caged bird, fluttering to be free. If only I might have gone a walk, I should have immensely enjoyed it and profited by it. If I had had any tiniest place to call my own to which I might have retired with a book, I should have been happy enough.

“I sometimes think how much smoother and pleasanter life might have been if only it had been possible for me ever to be alone. But throughout the long half-year—the plan of dividing the scholastic year into three terms had not yet begun, and school lasted from the 22nd of January to the 22nd of June, with a week off at Easter, and from the 2nd of August to the 22nd of December—throughout all these

months I was night and day, indoors and out, everywhere and always in company, and with company by no means such as I should have chosen.

“In respect of education, I fared better I suppose than most boys of my class ; for if geography and history were made as uninteresting as if they had been given for imposition, if Latin and Greek were taught as languages that were not only ‘dead’ but had never lived and only existed for the discipline of schoolboys, if science were represented only by a lecture on chemistry which meant nothing to us but a series of more or less exciting experiments, mathematics on the other hand was well taught and Euclid, taken by the Head Master himself, splendidly. For those classes in which I learnt to distinguish in the figure drawn with chalk on the blackboard the circle as black from the circumference as white, and such like obvious things, I have been always grateful. They turned my mind from its natural bent towards sentiment to reason and determined me to pursue the study of mathematics and try to win distinction in it.

“Possibly had it been otherwise, had I had a master who appreciated and taught us to appreciate the beauties of Horace and Virgil, of Homer and Æschylus, while mathematics were made as repulsive as Greek, my whole life might have been different. I might have trusted less to logic and more to feeling, been guided by the heart rather than by the head. Only in my old age have I begun to conceive a distrust of Reason, whose glimmering light has been my guide all my devious journey through. Perhaps I am wrong. My temperament is emotional, and it may have been for my good to cultivate the reasoning powers which required a stimulus.

“In October 1857 I left school for King’s College, London. But I was too young, not indeed in years but in mind and character, to profit of the collegiate system. I

looked and felt like an average boy of fifteen and ought to have been still at school, to which I happily returned the following January. And now began my time of awakening. My eyes were opened to see dimly, yet often enough ecstatically, the glory of earth and sky, my mind enlarged to discern the beauties of human thought enshrined in the literature of Greece and England, and I realised gradually something of the great problems of religion and life. I discovered Carlyle and Ruskin and, above all, Shelley, read scrappily enough but to much effect so far as impressions go.

“Hitherto I had regarded the evangelical Christianity in which I was brought up as truth so clear and evident that only ignorance or perversity could hinder its acceptance by all men. The Atheist and the Romanist I believed to be so manifestly in the wrong that they would be staggered by the simple arguments which out of my superior advantages I could bring to their knowledge. To the one I would say, ‘Look at the stars, who made them if there is no God?’; to the other, ‘Does not the Bible say, Thou shalt not worship any graven image, and again, The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,—and you, do you not worship images and teach that sin cannot be forgiven without confession to a priest?’ And now it was my fate for the first time to meet a man whose High Churchmanship was near to Romanism and to read the poems of an avowed unbeliever.

“I have said that I was always glad to make friends with the masters from my first coming to school, but either they thought as I did or did not condescend to argue with a boy. Now, on my return to school in my eighteenth year I found there a new master, and, as he was willing to enter into conversation with me, I soon opened my mind to him and showed him the little all of my thoughts and beliefs. They were not his, and when I tried my arguments upon him they were easily confuted. My texts were differently

explained, and other texts brought to my notice which seemed to admit of no Evangelical interpretation. 'The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth' (1 Timothy iii. 15)—what could this mean if not there was on earth some society on whose testimony the truth rested?—by which it was made known to men. 'The like figure whereunto baptism doth now save us'; so this ridiculous assertion that a child was born again by means of a ceremony, which in the superiority of ignorance I had mocked at, was taught by the Apostle Peter himself, and is found in 'the inspired Word of God.' 'Whose sins ye forgive they are forgiven'; so the ministers of Christ did receive from Him the power which the priest of the Church claims to have come down to him from them.

"I had built a shrine of cards, each card inscribed with a text impressed upon my mind from earliest childhood—words and meaning alike presumed to be infallible. And it had well served its purpose. In it the religiosity of my infant mind had found a home, and, taking to itself definite form, had grown and strengthened. I did not doubt but that it was a fortress inexpugnable by all the wiles of Papist or Rationalist. And lo, a gentle breath, the first which was ever permitted to blow upon it, and it lay in ruins. More than once afterwards, when I found myself shelterless, I tried to reconstruct it, but it was never the same and never lasted. The delusion of strength was irrecoverably lost. It was built of words and sentiments, not stones and mortar, and if it served as a temporary shelter it was of the frailest sort.

"For a while the Church took the place of the Book for me. Secretly I called myself a High Churchman, and in a weak moment let my eldest sister know as much. She was at the time engaged to a clergyman, and agreed with me in holding the Established Church in higher esteem than our

parents would approve. But I must have gone far beyond her, and she told of me. So begins the story of what I have had to suffer for religious opinions, held or denied.

“Had my parents, when they learnt that I was beginning to think for myself, either watched me and left me alone, or talked to me with kindness and sympathy, heard what I had to say, and asked me to listen in turn, my way of life might have been very different. But it was not possible for them. They knew the Truth, and because it was the Truth, and because the teachers were my parents, I was bound by both natural and divine law to accept and hold it fast. So it seemed to them.

“I was treated as one who had committed a grievous offence, and, overcome by threats and entreaties, I yielded and renounced the ‘errors’ into which I had been led. Much good could such repentance, motivated by the fear of unpleasant consequences if I held to them, do to me as a rational being! For the next four years I had no settled faith, but held different and often contradictory opinions together or in succession. I was sceptical, and passed through many phases. Once I believed myself to be really ‘converted.’ I prayed and read the Bible, ‘sought the Lord’ earnestly; but my parents were slow to recognise the reality of the change, which would indeed have filled them with joy and thankfulness if proved. They were right. It passed away after a while, and I became my normal self, Shelley and Sophocles satisfying my need of emotional excitation rather than Paul or the Prophets.

“These were years of keen intellectual life. I was greedy of knowledge, and added day by day to my store of miscellaneous information—‘gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, rubbish,’ all that came to hand I collected, and often have made use of some fact or text so stored away, after a lapse of thirty or forty years.

## CHAPTER III

### A CONVERT TO ROME

“IN October 1859 I went up to Cambridge. I had failed to get an open Scholarship at Pembroke in the preceding June; indeed, in the whole course of my life, tried as it has been by more than the usual number of examinations of all kinds and by many authorities, I have never failed to pass, never succeeded in competition. I have had what I deserved, and probably more, for it has never been in my power to apply myself long and assiduously to any subject, and I could not hope by sheer ability to win against more industrious and equally gifted competitors.

“The choice fell upon Emmanuel, as it seemed that there was more opportunity of obtaining there some pecuniary assistance in the way of exhibitions or scholarships in the ordinary course of study, which indeed I did in the succeeding year, though by no means distinguishing myself. Distinction I speedily earned of another sort. I was a ‘man’ now, as every boy straightway becomes on leaving school for the University. Indeed, I was in my twentieth year, but I looked seventeen, and was in some ways younger and in some much older than my contemporaries. The things in which I was interested, little as I knew of them, were literature, controversy, heresies, philosophies—in a word, thought. For sports I cared nothing, and was no good anyway; of fast life I knew nothing, and had no inclination at all to go in for



it. The curriculum which absorbed the attention of 'reading men,' as they were called, which ought in all reason to have satisfied me, as a fact did not do so. Geometrical conics were all very well, but I was much more interested in the doctrine of the Trinity, and when it came that a college examination was impending I found myself the night before wholly unprepared. I shut myself in, made strong coffee, wound a wet towel round my head, sat down to work, and—woke up at 3 o'clock, when I judged it was time to go to bed. I got through next morning, but I did not deserve it.

"I had taken mathematics for my line because it had a certain fascination for me, and I had been much better trained in it than in Greek or Latin; but I could not put my whole heart into it, and I was physically incapable of the continuous application it demanded. So, for reasons both of health and economy, it was decided after a year's experience that I should give up mathematics and prepare myself to take my degree in what was then called the Moral Science Tripos. I selected, of the six groups of subjects, moral philosophy, mental philosophy, and political economy, and for two years I studied with interest and derived lasting benefit.

"But other problems than those recognised by the University absorbed my mind. I was by nature of a religious temperament, and ever since I made the great discovery that the religious system in which I had been brought up was not, as I had been assured, founded on the rock and unassailable by argument, but was, on the contrary, raised on shaky ground and open to attack from every side—from this time I kept seeking the security of which I had been deprived. More and more urgently pressed upon me the questions—Which is the true Church of God? What does the Bible really teach? or Can what

it does teach be depended on? Was Jesus God indeed? Is there a God at all? When at home in London I used to go to the British Museum, nominally to study philosophy, but I was more occupied with Strauss' *Life of Jesus*, which I read and analysed. On the way home I used to go to evensong at All Saints', Margaret Street. For I was quite as much a High Churchman as I was what people would have called an infidel.

"The last phase of this unsatisfactory and divided allegiance to two masters, Reason and Authority, began on Good Friday 1862. The family, father, mother, and two sons, were asked to go and dine with 'a godly family' at Wimbledon. I declined to go. It was not only a flagrant defiance of parental authority, but it was a tacit condemnation of their conduct. Nothing was said, and I went to a three hours' service at St Barnabas, Pimlico, but I had made a stand and my right had been in a way admitted. And now I began more earnestly than ever to seek for truth. I put aside all negative arguments. I said I want to believe, I have found out how little reason can help me, I am ready to accept the Truth, come it from whom it may if only he can produce his credentials as teacher. Is there such a one?

"Had I known of such a teacher as was W. J. Fox, then the Radical member for Oldham, who some ten years earlier was lecturing at South Place Chapel, Finsbury, on 'The Religious Ideas,' my life might have followed a very different though certainly a not less troubled course. 'All religions are constructed of the same materials. They are all developments of the same germs; developments varied and modified by the influence of circumstances,'—these first words of the first lecture would have come as a light to me in the darkness by which I was environed. But all the men I knew or was brought into touch with were orthodox, and

those in whom I had any confidence were High Churchmen. I argued with myself—God must have made a revelation of Himself and His Will so far as it was necessary for men to know. He cannot have made them so that ‘they should seek God if haply they might feel after Him and find Him,’ and left them to grope in the darkness and imagine all manner of foolish and evil things respecting Him, and vouchsafed no ray of light to direct their steps. But where was such light, such guidance, to be discerned? Guides indeed presented themselves on all sides, in this agreed that each one was absolutely assured that he was right and whoever differed from him wrong. But self-assurance could impart no confidence to others. ‘The word of God,’ I would receive it on bent knees and with bowed head: but how was I to know that it was God’s Word indeed and not just man’s word about God? And if I accepted the Bible humbly, as in my earlier years, what did the Bible teach, I asked myself. All Christians were agreed to accept it, but how decide between the many interpretations of it? If God spoke to me I should be mad to refuse to believe Him, but what if the Voice was uncertain, if it seemed to say now one thing, now another, and never answered to my questions? Indeed how could it, seeing that it was not a living but a written word, which could not interpret itself? Who should speak for God, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it’ and make it plain before my eyes? A book could not; a man could not; however good, however learned, he could speak only for himself or out of the tremendous presumption that God Himself spoke through him.

“A revelation must be a living voice of God. And such the ‘Church’ claimed to be. I admitted the claim as the only alternative to the outer darkness of God’s silence. I returned to Cambridge in 1861 with a certain satisfaction to have got so far in my search for truth. I believe

whatever the Church teaches, I said. But I was straightway confronted with the question, What does the Church teach? As yet I had no thought of any Church but that into which I had been baptised—the Church of England, to which I belonged as an Englishman. I was ready to submit to her teaching as a little child, and asked only to be instructed. But the Church spoke with many voices. Even those who talked the most of her were not agreed as to what she taught. I sought out men of recognised weight and learning. ‘Is the Holy Communion a sacrifice?’ I asked of one; and the answer I got was, ‘I shouldn’t say simply a sacrifice, etc.’; but I didn’t want to know his opinion, but to learn the truth. I went to Canon Carter of Clewer and put to him the question, ‘What is the Rule of Faith, how am I to know what to believe?’ The answer I got was definite enough, seemed reasonable, and satisfied me for a full hour. What the Catholic Church taught before the division of East and West, that is of the Holy Ghost and to be accepted of all as revealed of God. At last I had found what I had been seeking so long, and I went off exultant to tell my friends, who had begun to fear for me that I was making way Romeward. Then I went back to my rooms, determined to find out for myself what was the teaching of the Undivided Church. It seemed simple enough till I came to think what it meant. I, who had neither learning nor application, was to determine for myself what it was that the Churches had taught with unanimous voice during the first thousand years of ecclesiastical history! And when by patient and prolonged study, I had reached a conclusion, what would it be worth except just as one opinion of little weight added to the discordant opinions of eminent divines, Anglican, Roman, Greek, accumulated during the controversies of nine centuries? The task was an impossible one for me, and

if by miracle I accomplished it the result would have been of no worth. It was bad enough to have to decide for myself what the Bible taught and stake my eternal salvation on the correctness of the decision. It was almost immeasurably worse to have to weigh the arguments and verify the statements of a thousand theologians and judge between them what was the truth.

“About this time I received from my own words a thrust Romeward. I was talking to a High Church friend at King’s about the doctrine of the Real Presence, as taught, I affirmed, by the Anglican Church. He objected that what I asserted was really the Roman doctrine of Transubstantiation. ‘No,’ I replied, ‘our Church says only, “*Here is the body of Christ*”; the Roman declares, “*This is My body.*”’ Quite inadvertently, in my effort to evade the charge of Romanism, I had fallen on the very words used by Jesus as exactly defining what the Roman Church taught. I was converted by myself. And, indeed, to this day it seems to me that transubstantiation—the change of the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the very Christ, His body and His blood necessarily importing His whole self—is a quite reasonable conclusion from the premise that the Gospels are an infallible record of the life and words of One who was God made manifest in the flesh. ‘This is My body, this is My blood,’ He said; and again, ‘He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life, for My flesh is true meat and My blood is true drink.’ Many of His disciples murmured, ‘This is a hard saying, who can stand it? and they left Him and walked no more with Him.’ But Jesus offered no explanation, such as Protestant theologians have found so easy. He knew how not that day only but throughout the ages His words would be cause of offence and dispute, how the outcome of them would be the divisions of His Church

and fierce persecution, how the most devoted of His followers would stand by their literal meaning, 'hard as they found it to accept'; knew how there would arise one distinguished for all time as philosopher, theologian, and saint, who would bow low his head before the mystery he could not understand, and write :—

“ ‘ Visus, gustus, tactus in te fallitur,  
 Auditui solo tuto creditur.  
 Credo quiddid dicit Dei Filius  
 Nil hoc verbo veritatis verius.’<sup>1</sup>

and how, generation after generation, millions of devout souls would, with like loving faith, accept His word and love to kneel in the presence of their Lord, made certain in the Sacrament of the Altar. A few more words, and He could have made His meaning plain to the most illiterate. Come down on earth that men might have life and light, is it credible that the Son of God would frame His teaching in phrases which would puzzle and revolt those who were disposed to accept Him, and delude those who with all their hearts accepted Him so that out of very fullness of confidence they should take for real what He meant to be only a figure of speech? Would a father so treat his children, a saviour those for whose sake He had come to die?

“ It is long since I gave up belief in the Godhead of Jesus and the infallibility of the Gospel record, but if I could be reconverted in my old age, and I began again to worship the Babe of Bethlehem as the Infinite and Eternal, the Preacher of Nazareth as the Creator of the Universe, I should have no further difficulty in taking Him at His

<sup>1</sup> Sight, touch and taste are each in thee deceived,  
 The ear alone most safely is believed.  
 True is whatever saith the Son of God,  
 Not aught more true than His, the Truth's, own word.

(ST THOMAS AQUINAS).

word, and with the great majority of my fellow-Christians, Roman and Greek and even Lutheran, worshipping His Presence veiled in the sacrifice of the Altar and the Blessed Sacrament.

“I was on my way to Rome now, and travelling faster than I knew. When I went down after the summer term of 1862, I sought an interview with Father Dalgairns of the London Oratory, at which I had frequently attended the weekday evening services, under the excuse of going to the South Kensington Museum. His name had become known to me through a quotation which I had met with from his book on *Holy Communion*. It was an appreciation of Simeon Stylites, the saint who strove to win heaven by making his life on earth a hell, as Tennyson writes :—

“‘ Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty God,  
This not be all in vain, that thrice ten years,  
Thrice multiplied by superhuman pangs,  
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and cold,  
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous throes and cramps,  
A sign betwixt the meadow and the cloud,  
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne  
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp and sleet and snow.’

What attracted me to this weird repulsive figure was that the Church had approved him, and to this I had come, and here I held on all through my Roman years, that to accept the Church as a divinely appointed teacher, and then take exception to its teaching was at once illogical and profane. So this defence of what seemed to Protestants scandalous and ridiculous appealed to me and formed my introduction to its author.

“I do not remember what passed between us in this interview, but the impression of having for the first time in my life spoken with a priest and having made him privy to the secret which up to then I was hardly myself assured of, was deeper than I knew. We were at that time giving

up our house in Brompton, where we had been living for the last ten years. My father had bought it when we were all young, feeling that the best thing he could do for us in case of his death was to assure us a roof over our heads. But now one girl had died, and another had married, and the two boys had grown to be young men and were not likely to live again at home. He and my mother had many friends, scattered over the three kingdoms, and were everywhere eagerly welcomed for Christ's sake and the Gospel. They proposed therefore to have rooms in London and be free to journey as 'the Lord called.' For us two sons there was no need to provide except in vacation, and it was arranged that for the Long I should go to Burwell, to farmhouse lodgings found for me by the curate, a college friend of mine. So there I found myself on my twenty-second birthday, ostensibly and even intentionally preparing for my examination for an honours' degree the next January. How I could have conceived it possible that I should pass, I cannot say. I certainly did not foresee what would happen to interrupt my supposed studies and change my whole course of life, but in the present I was wholly engrossed in the religious problem. I read Newman's *Lectures on Catholicism in England*—or was it his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*? I am not sure which, but in either case what I sought and found was an answer to the difficulties and a release from the prejudices which beset the Protestant who is attracted to the Roman Church, not by gradual acceptance of one doctrine after another peculiar to her, but as the only authority on earth which satisfies his longing for a certainty in respect of revealed truth.

"The end came quickly. I wrote to Father Dalgairns and received in reply an invitation to come and stay a few days at The Oratory. I left Burwell at once, and arrived



the same afternoon. I dined with the fathers, and I remember how, finding a plate of lettuce and bread set before each plate, I supposed that to be the accustomed fare of monks and began to eat with a good grace, but was presently undeceived by the appearance of soup and a proper dinner after the fashion of Rome.

“Afterwards I had a long talk in Dalgairns’ private room, but could not obtain satisfaction on the doctrines of Hell and Indulgences. ‘You believe in a good-natured God,’ he said to me ; and I answered, ‘Yes, that’s just what I do.’ I went to bed late, and, meditating over all I had heard, came with an immense sense of relief to the conclusion that I would not for the present come to any conclusion at all, and so disposed of the kind of terror the prospect of declaring myself a ‘pervert’ filled me with, and slept in peace. The next morning I told him of my resolve, and proposed at once to return whence I came. He asked me to wait a while, and I did so, on the clear understanding that I had ‘made up my mind’ and was not to be moved.

“He told me that he had to visit a convent in the neighbourhood, and committed me to the care of one of the brothers or postulants, named Harrison. He was perhaps two years younger than myself, and I looked down upon him much as a third-year man does upon a freshman. I certainly was not going to discuss with him difficulties which a learned theologian had not been able to meet to my satisfaction. But he did not attempt to argue or to persuade me. When I told him briefly and somewhat haughtily of my decision, intending so to preclude discussion, he let me know his own story. He was the son of a clergyman and a Westminster School boy, had somehow got to know the Oratorians, and almost against his will been brought into the Church. The affair caused some little sensation at the time, and of course there were accusations of undue influence

brought to bear upon a mere boy. Whatever may have been the defence made by the community—if indeed any defence was made at all,—the real reply would have been that when it was a question of co-operating with the Holy Ghost which had moved the boy's heart, and so saving his soul, the rights of parents or schoolmasters were of no account.

“I cannot at this distance of time recall his story, but I know that it worked a marvellous change in me. When Dalgairns returned, he said to him, ‘He is ready now, father, to be received’; and I was ready. I renounced all my objections, dismissed my doubts, and the same afternoon I made a general confession of my past life, was baptized ‘under condition’—*i.e.* to make sure, in case the Protestant baptism I had previously received was, through some negligence on the part of the administrator, invalid,—and so became a Roman Catholic.

“But how was the change wrought? I have often asked myself the question, nor ever found an answer which really satisfied me. Was it a masterly act of priestly insight and cunning, this employment of the tamed bird to decoy the wild fowl hovering timidly round the trap, allured by the bait and fearful of the consequences? ‘I was just in your position a while ago. I wept and resisted, finally consented, and lo, the net I was afraid of was my safeguard, the enclosure I dreaded was a sweet pleasance where I have found food and protection and truest freedom.’ Such was the impression his words made upon me. How far it was foreseen and intended I cannot say, but in all my reading and experience of after years, I have never known or heard it suggested as a means of winning converts.

“It did prevail upon me. But why? By the grace of God, said my new-found friends. By the wiles of the devil, said my parents. Even so, admitting one or other of the

alternative explanations, they are both alike incomplete. God or Satan were outside of my soul. How did the one or the other influence me? What was the inner working which in so short a time brought so personally tremendous a result?

“My own theory is this—that what really kept me from submitting to the Church was not doubts or difficulties, such as easily suggest themselves whenever we are impelled to doing what we do not want to do. It was self-interest, it was moral not intellectual, the obstacle to my conversion. To join the Church of Rome was an adventure I dared not face. Hitherto I had been entirely dependent on my parents. If I could suppress my doubts and scruples, I should avoid the open rupture with them which I dreaded, and for the present—indeed after the manner of youth I troubled myself very little about the future—I could go on indulging my religious sentiment with Roman devotions and Anglican services, and living the old easy dilettante life which I had got into the way of. It was, I must confess, horribly selfish. It was not the pain I should inflict upon others which weighed with me, but the extreme discomfort to myself.

“I was in the position similar to that of thousands at the beginning of the War, who heard the call of their country and felt it to be their duty to enlist, but could not make up their minds to give up everything—their home, their work, their recreation, their liberty, their prospects—and face the discipline, the restraints, the hardships, the dangers of the soldier’s life. Many, no doubt, there were who out of a stern sense of patriotism or of duty did not hesitate: many who held back and found excuses, good and bad, to ease their consciences; and of these how many whose reluctance was overcome not by appeals or arguments, but by the example of a friend or brother? So we are made. Reason

has little influence with us, conscience does not control us, but fellow-feeling prevails.

“So it was with me. Taking it too much for granted that there had been given to men a divine and supernatural revelation, I had been led on to see that such a revelation was futile unless there was to be found a living authority to keep and to interpret it, and that such absolute authority could be no other than the only Church which even claimed to be such. So far all was clear to me. Then followed the practical conclusion, inevitable, undeniable. I must join the Church of Rome. There failed me the resolution, the strength of character, for such a step. I fell back upon the pretence of further consideration which had an appearance of wisdom but was mere cowardice. It was a fellow-man, a man nearly of my own age, and similarly circumstanced, who showed how he had faced the identical trial and overcome which determined me.

“It is more than half a century now since that, to me, fateful day. Looking back upon it through all these years, an old man now who has learnt much and endured much, I pass judgment on the wayward youth, which was myself, and it is this: Young man, this act is by far the best of your life so far. There is much to condemn in your college career, much excuse to be made for your shortcomings, for you lacked strength of mind and body, and were of slow development, and the large freedom of University life was ill suited to one who was yet a boy and needed the discipline of office, if not a school. But to-day you begin a new life with an act of which, judging by your past, I should have considered you incapable. You have heard the call ‘Follow me,’ and certain that it was the call of Truth, you arose and left all and followed. You were mistaken, as I judge now, in your assumption that there has been a revelation for all time made at a given time and place. The truth, as I

have long held, is that revelation is as natural in the spiritual world as sunshine in the material world.

“It is ‘the light that lighteth every man,’ as the writer of the prologue to the Fourth Gospel has it, vouchsafed to each in proportion to his capacity of understanding and his good will. So Theodore Parker had taught in Boston while you were yet in your teens, but you could not have heard so much as his name, and even had you sought advice of English Unitarians, of whom you had never met one, it was to such a teacher you would have been directed. I judge you mistaken, but you are blameless and even praiseworthy. You were true to the light you had, and—an old man now—I thank and bless you for all I have owed to you since.

## CHAPTER IV

### FIRST EXPERIENCES IN THE CHURCH OF ROME

“IN a couple of hours of that summer’s day, there came upon me a change of thought and feeling more complete and penetrating than I was capable of realising at the time. For better or for worse, and I know it was for better, I had become another man. The break with my old life, even in its most intimate relations, was complete. I began a new life under new circumstances. When a man puts off his civilian’s suit and puts on khaki, there is the like change as concerns all externals of his life, but he remains the same man within. I was changed in soul as well as surroundings. It did not impress me so immediately. My inner life of thought and emotion had hitherto been too uncontrolled, my convictions too readily formed and as readily abandoned. I had inclined to Atheism, Pantheism, Gnosticism, Pietism Evangelical and Anglican, and this was another phase with which I was content for the time, without questioning how long it might last.

“There was, however, a twofold difference between all my past experiments in religiosity and this venture. They had cost me nothing, and they rested on sentiment or fancy supported by feeblest pretence of reason. This last had cost me a great effort, and it had for foundation an argument the validity of which is, I believe still, assured.

“Moreover, the position in which I found myself was one specially adapted for the deepening and stimulating

of nascent faith. I was made to feel myself at home in a religious community whose devotion was as a genial atmosphere pervading all the place. I absorbed eagerly the gentle teachings which were given me by way of conversation and example, and I became very soon a fervent Catholic. And so I was insensibly prepared for the great trial, the greatest of my life, which I had to face.

“The day after my conversion I wrote to my father,<sup>1</sup> who at the time was travelling in Ireland with my mother. The letter has just come into my hands, after long years, and is, I think, worth printing as a contemporary document. I have been tempted to amend it, for neither in style nor manner is it creditable to a young man of University education, but to do so would destroy its value, and I am not writing to commend myself, but simply to tell my life story.

*July 24, 1862.*

‘MY BELOVED FATHER,—What mockery such an address will seem to you when I am about to impose on you one of the bitterest trials I could possibly contrive for you.

‘I have been for months looking forward to this time, and even now I would have spared you, if God’s power had not been too strong for me.

‘You know to some extent what has been the course of my religious belief for some years. To some extent, I say, for you never knew the depth to which I had fallen, you never knew that Strauss and Newman had been my favourite writers. And that while I have sat and listened to you at family prayers, I have

<sup>1</sup> “He was more gifted, I have heard my mother say, for ministering to the Lord’s people than for awakening sinners, and it was his habit every summer to make a round of visits in Scotland and Ireland, passing from house to house of those whose hearts were turned to the Lord and welcomed the word of His servant. Dukes—more than one—earls, barons, were among his hosts, and he would pass from their mansions to the houses of tenant farmers with, I believe, little consciousness of any difference of rank or circumstances.

thought how little you knew that I disbelieved the Bible you read and the God-man you prayed by. Well, my father, I was brought out of this state last October, by a really miraculous intervention of God, from one week being in a state of intense bigotry and pride, I was brought without any human instrumentality to say, "speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." At that time I had recovered from my state of utter unbelief, and had been for more than a year a rationalist and firmly believing it to be the religion of the New Testament, so that whenever I read the N.T., I felt more strong in my own doctrine. I could no longer go to the Bible that I had so grossly misinterpreted—that being privately interpreted gave foundation to a hundred sects. I looked despairingly around for a faith. One hundred roads were opened to me, how should I know the right? One seemed plainer than others, the Church of England as a branch of the Catholic Church. I tried to listen to it. I believed one thing and another purely—and then the question arose as to whether I was rightly interpreting it, its voice must be very hesitating when men of exactly opposite views believed themselves in accordance with it, and then again I seemed lost. I almost despaired of salvation, when a road was opened to me. The Roman Church rose before me, as the *One Church*, the *Catholic Church*, "*the pillar and ground of the faith.*" Sunday after Sunday, I said, "I believe one Holy, Catholic Church," and I asked myself how *three* could be *one*, how the body of Christ could possibly be rent and torn. Impossible. From this time (last November) my convictions continually increased, I never spoke to a Catholic till last June, when I had been for months a Catholic in heart. This is no priestcraft. You may say the devil has been leading me, but certainly no man has done so.

'Every one whom I looked up to was the other way, dissuading, horrified. And so I trifled with con-



science. I knew what was right, but it was an awful trial. At last, I went in the middle of June to a priest, with the secret hope that he would make some admission which would allow me to remain where I was—allow me to abide in peace with you, which was a source of continual joy to me. I was not a bit more confirmed by him. I argued, as in duty bound, against the very arguments I had used to others. And then when I resisted God's grace, I grew weaker and harder than ever. At last I wrote from Burwell to a priest of the Oratory. I told my utter wretchedness, how I must come to the Church, a beggar and worse than an orphan, and I implored from him, *a man*, leave to do what I knew to be *sin*—to stop in Protestantism when I was convinced that God had called me out of it. He wrote to me to come and see him. When I got the letter I rushed from the house as if mad, the devil prompted me to kill myself rather than obey. I only thought that must be a greater trial to you than any other could possibly be, and the devil all the while pulling me back, I went.

'I was convinced I ought to join the Church, when in my agony there appeared a loophole of escape. The priest to whom I went would not receive me, unless he was satisfied of my firm belief in Christianity. And the devil suggested to me that I did not believe in hell, and so I fought and struggled on this point, and I left his room telling him that I had quite made up my mind not to join. I thought that scepticism might be tenable, that I could easily persuade myself of it, that I could keep it from you and be happy.

'I had a conversation with one who had only been a convert some fifteen months, telling him of my determination. But from a few plain words with him, I was overpowered with conviction, and I have been received into the Church, vowing (of my own accord without anyone knowing it or advising), "in presence of all the holy angels and saints, and above all in the presence

of the most holy Trinity, that I desire to live and die in the faith of the holy Roman Church.”

‘O, my beloved father, and mother, it is fearfully bitter to give you up. I have been all my life sinning against you and giving you sorrow and pain, but I have in my inmost soul so loved you that I would have at any time borne pain, and I believe death for you, gladly. But now, *nothing* shall separate me from my faith. I have anticipated that you might entirely disown me. I know that I must be cut off from you, but loving you, father, to the utmost, I will hate in the points where God demands it.

‘Do not, I implore you, entertain a hope of my turning back. I will not myself listen to a single suggestion of change. I believe that if I did so I should be committing my soul to the lowest hell, and I will avoid it to the very uttermost.

‘Remember that in becoming a Catholic I have not left your faith. I have not been a real believer in it since I was seventeen. But I left an awful scepticism. I believe in Jesus and his atonement and my own utter worthlessness without his blood, Blood flowing in the channel of the Church, and watering, God be praised, even the deserts on its banks.

‘This letter has been written by me, without any advice from any one—not one sentiment in it, not one word has been suggested. I was ordered to write and tell you, and that was all about it.

‘May God teach me, my parents, to pay to you all honour not due to him.’

“Not having received an answer to my letter, which did not reach him till more than a fortnight after date of writing, I wrote as follows :—

‘August 11, 1862.

‘MY DEAREST FATHER,—I suppose you will have got by this time the letter I wrote immediately after my becoming a Catholic. It is not such a one as

I should write now, for I was then full of excitement and passion. I am far stronger in the faith now than then—far cooler in it and better able to meet any adversity for its sake. Of course, when it came to the point, the flesh might fail, but I do not hesitate to say that I would gladly die for the faith, if it were required of me.

‘As to all my past life, I can only say with you, self-will and vanity. I have indeed behaved very badly to you, my dear father. I do not deny that it may have been my duty to let you know of the state of my mind, while I was in doubt, but I had not the courage to do it, and I kept thinking that I need not take the step yet, and that I might wait till I could take a degree, and so on. But when the hour came that all doubts ceased, then I felt that I could not wait, for I might die in what I believed to be a false faith. Ah, day by day my past life grows blacker to me—all sin and vanity and so little exercise of feeling for you. I never realised the horror of sin and the preciousness of The Precious Blood as I have since I have been a Catholic. But your Popery is an altogether different thing from The Holy Roman Church. I feel that it would not become me in my present state of mind to answer your arguments, because I am beyond conviction, and it is not the part of a son to instruct his father. I desire to pay you all the reverence that is not due to God, but it seems to me that your wishes are diametrically opposed to my duty. Indeed, I love you, my father, though I cannot expect you to believe it, because it must be at present a love shown only in words and prayers. But God knows my heart. Do not think that the word of God is closed to me. I am taught to value it more than I ever did, and it is the special rule of the order of Oratorians to read God’s word and give themselves to prayer.

‘I shall always say that the Bible led me to the Church. Certainly no man was my leader. As to

those without the Church, we are only taught that they are without the way of salvation and God's ordinary means, but that He always accepts true repentance if there be an invincible ignorance of the Church, such as is so often the case with one who has been suckled in hatred of it.

'I shall leave town this week for a school near Birmingham, where I may get an usher's place. I am thankful that God has put me in a position where I can suffer and love for Him. Of what am I worthy?—*Ever my dearest* father, your loving son,  
'C. H.'

"I directed my letters to the Earl of Roden's care. He was an Evangelical nobleman to whom I knew my father was sure to pay a visit while in Ireland. There it was that the news, which to him and my mother was truly heartbreaking, reached them. He wrote on the 9th of August a letter, of which I have a copy in my mother's handwriting:—

'MY POOR DEAR BOY,—I am unwilling to let you go without a word, and it is with a heavy heart that I write it. Ah! you have caused your parents much sorrow and but little comfort, and this is not God's way. You have been wilful and wayward, and this is the end of it. You have given Satan power over you, and he has used it to the casting down of your parents, friends and relations, to your own sore loss, and, worst of all, to the dishonour of God. Oh, what misery are you laying up for yourself! You will awaken to it, but it may be when it is too late, when your mind is so bewildered and shackled that you cannot discern truth from error, or be able to act on your conviction. Oh, awaken! stir yourself! call upon the Lord before it is too late—too late. How different had it been with you now had you followed your parents' counsel, but that was not your way.

You not only failed to counsel with us whom God had given you as the legitimate counsellors to your youth and inexperience, but you have rejected our counsel to your own loss. You would have your own will, and the enemy that is ever going about took his advantage of it, and it has been with deep distrust that I have seen your course, questioning some of the vital truths of Revelation, neglecting the Word of God and prayer, and here is the result, the unclean abode in which Satan has led you to settle down, the awful and God-dishonouring delusion into which you have been suffered to fall by following your own will. Our own will, or yielding to it independently, ever gives power to the enemy; subjection to God's will is the secret of God's power in us, and where can I find God's will but in God's revelation of His will, in His own blessed Word. This Word is practically closed to you in the communion which you have chosen for yourself; like many a one besides, probably as it is with us all, as you have sown so you have reaped. Before God, I warn you, not in anger but in sorrow and love, I warn you, whose duty it is to warn you, you whose duty it is to give heed to my warning above that of any man upon earth, take heed that you go no further in this evil way—that you no longer listen to the traditions of men above the Word of the living God—that you call upon God and break away from these bonds of Satan. May God awaken your slumbering conscience and stir up your heart to do so. You have been thinking of the Church when you should have been thinking of Christ. You have been tampering with the corrupted communion that names His name, while you have been dishonouring HIM. If ever you be converted, what shame and sorrow will this step cause you. Conversion is with you turning to the Church, not turning to Christ, and this with all your opportunities of light and knowledge from your earliest dawn.

‘O, my poor boy, come, come from this labyrinth of error in which you have entangled yourself, Satan helping you. I acknowledge the Church, I admire it in its beauty, perfect through His comeliness which He puts upon it—but what communion upon earth, what ecclesiastical body can assume this title to itself—the Church, the body of Christ? Of course if any one communion be so, then everyone not in it is hopelessly lost, for there can be no safety out of the Church, apart from the body. Are you prepared for such a conclusion? The Church truly is the body of Christ’s members, all His people, His true redeemed people who follow Him, not the traditions of men. They are indeed hopelessly scattered through different sects and parties, and more is the sorrow and the shame, but when the Lord promised that His sheep should never perish, He did not promise that they should never be scattered, and scattered indeed they are beyond the power of man to gather them. The Holy Ghost can do it, but He only. Their own sinfulness has done it—the source of all evil, as God’s holy will is of all good. It was said by one of the early bishops of Rome, in the sixth century I believe, that whatever church assumed to itself the title of Catholic or universal stamped itself with the mark of apostasy, or words to that effect, and truly so, and remarkable it is that the body so calling itself is filled with more evil than any other upon earth—filled with many who are murderers, adulterers, blasphemers, etc., etc. Can these be of the body of Christ? But they are of what you call the Catholic Church—while some of the holiest saints who walk the heart, and are not of this external body, are these excluded from the Catholic Church?

‘Read attentively the creed of Pope Pius, and if your eyes be not altogether closed, see how this evil system to which you have allied yourself—everything peculiar to it—is based on the rejection of

God's Word. The Old Creed or the creed of the Old Church and the true Church now, founded on God's Word, you have in the former part—the tendency of it to dishonour and discredit the Son of God and His perfect work. In God's Word I find everything that is good and pure and perfect, everything my soul wanteth, for it is the Spirit's testimony to Christ. I find man's traditions overlaying it all in the Church of Rome, hiding its glories and hindering access to its virtues. Oh, I feel it sad, most sad, that the name of Jesus should be so dishonoured by a son of mine, and one from whom at one time I fondly hoped better things. I feel ready to hide my face in shame, I lie before the Lord; and while I ask Him why it is so? I pray for you that you may be delivered before it is too late, that you may be led from your Church to Christ; the Church never did save one, Christ only can,—He that gave Himself for the Church. Oh, that you might be a member of the true Church by conversion to Christ. Where does God tell us to look to the Church? "Look unto Me and be ye saved" is God's Word. If you are true, if you are honest, you will find it; if not, you are only increasing the bonds with which the enemy is binding you, and your case will be hopeless. In youth and inexperience you foolishly committed yourself, and as you grew up, instead of counselling with those with whom you ought to have counselled in your difficulties, you went to others who riveted your chains. It is a very solemn thought connected with you that while one of the leading inferiorities of your character is vacillation, I have seen you doggedly determined in error only. From whence came this power so contrary to you? Oh, it is a fearful thought. You are entangled, and you know not in what, for you little know the system to which you are committed, its hostility to God and His saints—the woman drunken with the blood of the saints.

‘The Word of God tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ hath put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself ; your Church has many and oft-repeated sacrifices. The Word tells us that He has purged our sins ; your Church will have another purgatory. The Word tells us that He ever liveth to make intercession for all that come unto God by Him ; your Church has many intercessors. The Word tells us that all have sinned ; your Church makes the Virgin Mary immaculate, and an intercessor moreover, and, as I have often witnessed in the early days of my ministry among the poor Roman Catholics in Ireland, how much more they make of her than of Him, who is at God’s right hand.

‘Oh, stir yourself from this deadly slough into which you are fallen, use the powers which God has given you, and don’t suffer yourself to be enslaved by man. It is not by silencing but by exercising your mind in dependence upon God, in searching His Word, that you may look for truth. Remember the testimony to the Bereans in the xvii of Acts. They were more noble in that they received the Word of God with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily, etc. The Lord deliver you, the Lord in His mercy pardon you this great evil—this great dishonour to Him—this great trouble you have put upon your parents in their old age. We never knew anything like it. We have lost six children, and what anguish of heart was the parting with them, but what is it to this ? We then could say, as one after another was taken, it is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good. We cannot say it now. We see that it is the enemy of the Lord, he has laid hold on our own child with his strong grasp, and he has yielded to him, he has hardened him in a lie, and he suffers himself to be hardened and obstinate and lets him have dominion over him. And we are bowed down and have great heaviness and continued sorrow in



our hearts for our own child that is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. I ask the Lord why it is that He suffers me to be so afflicted in my old age when my time is but short. I know not. He knoweth. There is some needs be. My only comfort is that He is over the enemy, and can overrule it all to our good and His own glory.

‘May He have mercy on you and open your eyes and teach you what is in you and what is in Him, what sin and pride and folly is bound up in your heart, what love and goodness and mercy is in Him.

‘Receive this word and ponder from your grieved yet affectionate father. If you do not, it will rise in judgment against you.’

“Oh what misery have good men and women contrived for themselves by the assurance that in matters of religion their belief was truth revealed from heaven, and that all who believed more or less were enemies of truth and of God, and led astray by the powers of evil! The writer of the Book of Revelation laid the curse of God on all who should add to or take away from his book. Because it chanced to come at the end of the Bible, Christians have made it apply to all their sacred Scriptures, and then to the particular interpretation they have put upon them, and to the body of doctrine they have deduced from them. If you do not believe that Jesus of Nazareth was Almighty God, you are a lost soul. If, on the strength of His word, you believe that He is truly present in the consecrated elements you are in parlous state, scarcely admitting of salvation. Equally so if you deny the ‘truth’ or any other doctrine by the authority of Rome declared to be revealed. Anger, hatred, anguish of heart, torture, murder, war—‘so great the evils to which religion could prompt,’ wrote the Roman poet-philosopher before Christ was born. He could not foresee how Christianity would add to the

monstrous heap of evils he knew of, nor conceive it possible that a religion whose founder preached the love of God and man as the whole law, and rebuked disciples who would stay a man from doing good because he was not of their following, would become of all the world's faiths the most intolerant. But it is the fault neither of Christianity nor of religion, but of that cancerous growth which attaches itself to all human persuasions, and in religious beliefs finds its most favourable soil. 'If you do not agree with me, you sin against God and man, and deserve severest reprobation.'

"One thing that weighed upon my mind during those peaceful days of spiritual sunshine and growth which followed upon my reception into the Church, was the debts which I had incurred during my three years at Cambridge. The total amount was under £40, but, as I had nothing wherewith to pay them, it was a serious problem how to meet my liabilities. My father had a horror of debt, and cautioned me strongly against it when I first went up. He said that I had given him a promise to keep out of it, which I would have done indeed very lightly at a time when the word had no meaning for me. It would have been difficult for me to get into debt while at school even to the extent of a few shillings, and I did not realise any more than perhaps he did how great the change of conditions would be in passing from school to the University.

"The town was full of shops offering goods to suit every taste and on longest credit. Above all, there were books in abundance, second-hand and reasonably cheap, and nothing to pay in the present. I succumbed to the temptation then in my ignorance and inexperience, as I do succumb now when I know full well the folly of buying what you don't want. A statute of the University bound every tradesman in the town

to send any account owing by an undergraduate at the end of the term, if exceeding £5 in amount, to the tutor of the debtor's college. I owed a great deal more than £5 for books very soon after my settlement at Cambridge; but my indebtedness was distributed in small sums among the seven or eight booksellers of the town, and only once did I fall into the trap set by the Senate with such benevolent intentions.

“I mention this to explain the following letter, evidently written in anger and bitterness of heart<sup>1</sup> :—

‘In forwarding the accounts which your brother has sent me I feel called on to make some observations on them. You confess to him that you have been a fool. I must say that I think you were something worse, and that these accounts exhibit a want of truth and principle. I put the promise on you not to go in debt, and I find that you commenced from your early residence to break the solemn promise which you made me—but in truth it is of a piece with your course for several years. It has been a course of wilfulness and disobedience to parents, it then went on to rebellion against God, using the mind He gave you to dishonour His Son and to discredit the word of His grace.<sup>2</sup> You would not receive the truth which you had been taught from your earliest years, indeed of late you seemed to hate it. So in righteous retribution God gave you over to believe a lie—to settle down in a degraded and degrading bondage, the most corrupt system both as to principle and practice in Christendom—for the claims of Unitarianism, a worse thing, to be in any sense called Christian I do not admit.

‘You intimated in a letter to your brother that it

<sup>1</sup> “I must have written to him asking him to try to arrange with my creditors, and promising to pay in full out of my first year's salary at Oscott.

<sup>2</sup> “Had I put it gently to him that his own course as a student at Edinburgh had not been by his own confession exemplary, he would have answered that he had not, like me, been brought up in the truth.

was Mr Murray's teaching in mathematics and the habit of reasoning that followed from it, which made you what you are. Was it then mathematical reasoning which led you to worship a wafer!—what one sees, feels, tastes, and *knows* to be nothing but a wafer. Where does Scripture ask our belief in a miracle under such circumstances? When our Lord transubstantiated water into wine, He gave them full evidence that it was wine, and water no longer. What evidence is there of the change of the wafer which a mouse may devour or a delicate stomach vomit up? Was it mathematical reasoning that led you to believe in the liquefaction of the blood of St Januarius, that compound of knavery and foolery to gull the credulous? Was it mathematical reasoning which leads you to call a woman the mother of God, or to make a mediator of that woman, or to say that she was without sin? Or is it mathematical reasoning which leads you to call a body the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church which contains within it hundreds of thousands of thieves, robbers and murderers, liars and blasphemers, whoremongers, adulterers and prostitutes, etc., etc.? Truly this mathematical reasoning is a wonderful thing for proving that black is white. But if there be such reason in favour of Romanism, why is it that your Church when challenged to stand out and show herself in the light and defend herself from the accusation of her opponents, always skulks into the dark? No, it is not light nor reason nor evidence that your Church rests on, but on the assumption of authority submitted to by its dupes and based on the rejection of the one and only authority—God's Word.

‘I have felt called upon before God to say so much to you. Whether your rulers will allow you to read it or whether, if they do, you have the capability of bringing an honest mind to it, I know not, but I much doubt. You knew well that nothing could be more repulsive to your parents than your connection

with this unclean and idolatrous system. Yet, when doubts began to assail you from having suffered yourself to be so led of Satan, instead of coming to them or to the ministers of your own profession, you go and throw yourself into the arms of a priest. Was this candour or affection to your parents? Ah, poor boy, poor blind deluded dupe, you have done sadly for yourself, but I trust God will yet have mercy on you and deliver you from your prison-house.

‘You say that after you began to speculate<sup>1</sup> you were never without doubts. It is what one would expect. Speculation never led one to the truth, and nothing is more likely to lead into unbelief. You had not these doubts before.

‘So in the shiftings of your unregenerate mind you adopted at different times, high-churchism, rationalism, infidelity, popery, all abominations of Satan, as you were led captive by him. You yielded yourself to him and he made his fool of you. You believed you were thinking your own thoughts while you were just his puppet.

‘Do not suppose that I write this with the idea of changing your mind. No, you have yielded yourself to Satan, and I firmly believe that no power of argument, no human persuasion, no tie of affection can break the bond.

‘Your course of late years has been heartless and unprincipled, but your mother and I still hold you in our affections and our prayers, while utterly abhorring that course and looking upon the last step as the crowning evil of all.’

“I do not know what answer I made to this piteous appeal. There was none which could avail with him any more than his taunts and entreaties could with me. I had

<sup>1</sup>“By ‘speculation’ he no doubt means free inquiry into the ‘truths’ I had been brought up in. This began with me from the age of seventeen.

the advantage that I knew well and had long considered his position. Of mine, he knew no more than what he had learnt when an Irish clergyman in order to fit himself the better for the controversy with Roman Catholics. But no human belief can be understood merely from the outside, and still less from a survey of it with hostile intent. There is needed a certain sympathy with the believer. Let it be that to you his devotion is ridiculous and his doctrines incredible of any sane man. It remains that to him they have a meaning and value only to be discovered by entering into his mind, seeing as he sees, feeling as he feels. There is a rationale, a reasonable explanation, of all religions from fetishism upwards, but it is not manifest to the hatred or contempt of him who can see nothing good or reasonable outside his own set of opinions.

“I had been now for more than a fortnight living as a guest at the Oratory and, admitted into their intimate fellowship, I quickly assimilated their way of thought and life. “The Congregation,” as it is called, was founded by St Philip Neri in 1583, as a community of secular priests living together of their own free will, and not bound as members of the religious orders by vows. Their home reminds one more of a college than of a convent. They furnish their own rooms and keep their own property, and devote themselves to study and the ministry of pulpit and the confessional.

“The little band of converts who went over with Newman in 1845 made acquaintance with them in Rome, and were attracted by the large liberty and devout life of those they met. The first English Oratory was founded in Birmingham, and thence some of the younger men with Faber and Dalgairns went to London. These were not truer Catholics, but they were more intensely Roman, imbued with the local spirit of the Holy City and seeking to follow

it even in small details, so that it was jokingly said that they had imported Roman fleas into their Brompton church. To these men the Church from which they had come out was abhorrent, and they ordinarily spoke of the Anglican clergy as 'bonzes,' the name by which the native priests of Japan were known to the Portuguese, using the word precisely as we do. When shortly afterwards I came among old Catholics, I used the word in conversation and was surprised to find that I was not understood. About hell they were very outspoken. 'Won't he have a hot place?' said one of them, speaking, I think, of Garibaldi. 'I am greatly afraid he has gone to hell,' said Father Faber of a lay brother who had left the Order and recently died. This was in the balcony of their country house in Norwood, just after he had been explaining that he had been obliged to give up his favourite seat under a tree in the garden because he found that he frightened the birds. One who did not know English might have thought that 'hell' meant 'gaol' or 'workhouse' from the tone in which it was uttered.

"It was the custom at dinner for one of the fathers to state a 'case of conscience' or moral problem, and each in turn gave his opinion on it. It was told me by Father Law, who left the Church and afterwards became Librarian of the Signet Library at Edinburgh, that once in his time the case was propounded of a devout lady who confessed that she had spoken evil falsely of a priest who had become an 'apostate.' What judgment should the confessor pass on her? The charge she made being a grave one, affecting his moral character in the eyes of the world, was it to be dealt with as a mortal or a venial sin?

"The general opinion was that as the calumny was not uttered out of any personal motive of hatred or vindictiveness, but only out of a sense of the enormity of the offence

actually committed, it was but a venial sin. The opener summed up, denying that there was any sin at all, asserting that the penitent was rather to be commended because the motive of the act was devotion to Holy Church and horror of one who had betrayed her. His apostasy, she argued, must have been preceded by some gross offence against the moral law. What harm if she hinted at what it was ?





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HARGROVE'S MOTHER

## CHAPTER V

### MY MOTHER

“THE tranquillity of these days of convent fervour was broken in upon in a way I had not thought of. I had been expecting by every post a reply to my letter of the 24th July, and I knew pretty well of what kind it would be and was prepared to answer it with all dutifulness of manner and firmness of decision. The reply came at last, and to this day I shrink from recalling the scenes which followed.

“I was walking in the corridor, whose windows faced upon the drive, and engaged in telling my beads, when I caught sight of a woman’s figure approaching the door of the big house. It was my mother, who I doubted not was far away in Ireland. And instantly I found myself involved in a sea of troubles. I went down to her. She was in one of the small waiting-rooms in which visitors were received. I entered, and immediately she threw herself on her knees, imploring me to wake up from the delusion I was labouring under. I know not how long the interview lasted or how it ended, but she told me of all she had gone through in the search for me. When my letter reached them she started off at once to come to me, true and loving mother that she was. It was just what she would have done if the news it brought had been that I was lying dangerously ill and with no one to look after me. Indeed this was worse news by far ; as my father wrote once of me, ‘I had rather see him lying in his coffin’ than what I was.

“She must have taken the night mail from Dublin, and made her way by slow train to Blisworth Junction and thence to Cambridge. She told me that she spent this last slow stage of the journey, when she was anticipating the meeting with me, on her knees, and when a gentleman got into the compartment she begged him to be so kind as to find a seat elsewhere as she was in great trouble. How she got from Cambridge to Burwell I don't know, for there was no line through at that time, and the only public conveyance was the carrier's cart. There she sought out the curate, a college friend of mine who lived with his mother and sister, and from them found out that I was still at the London Oratory. They put her up for the night, and the next afternoon she found her son, persuaded that a mother's prayers and tears would prevail to deliver him from the obsession under which he lay.

“It was arranged, I know not how, that the house of some friends in the neighbourhood who were away from home, should be put at the disposal of our family, and there I went daily to see her and talk with her. Oh, it was so utterly hopeless. Her arguments were such as a well-instructed Roman Catholic child could have answered, but she had all her life relied upon them, and when I gave the answer she was astonished at ‘the Jesuitical subtlety’ which I had so quickly learnt, and again and again fell on her knees and clasped mine, entreating me with tears to abandon my false guides and return to the faith in which I had been brought up.

“The position was an impossible one. I was convinced that I had found the true light. My mother equally convinced that I had closed my eyes and turned my back against the light and was in outer darkness. There was no room for argument, even if she had been a skilful controversialist. The appeal from reason to affection can avail

nothing. A man *cannot* change his beliefs because love bids him do so. He may dissimulate, call himself Protestant or Catholic for the sake of those he loves. He cannot *be* other than he is 'fully persuaded in his own mind.'

"After two or three days my father arrived. Of what passed between us I can recall only two incidents. The one was that he took up a little book of prayers composed by St Gertrude, a Benedictine abbess of the eleventh century, which I had brought, thinking to show my mother how fully Roman Catholics shared her devotion to Jesus. He opened it on the words, 'O most sweet wounds of Jesus.' It was enough. He closed it with an expression of revulsion, though one might think the wounds of the God-man were as 'precious' as His blood.

"The other was in respect to the commandment against the worship of idols, which I had always been told the Catholics had suppressed in the Douay translation of the Bible, authorised for use 'among the faithful.' I showed him the verses almost identical with the Protestant version, and explained that the difference was simply one of division. He put it aside as 'tampering with the Word of God,' it mattered little whether by suppression or by combination, making one commandment out of two and so weakening the force of the second. The fact is that this division is a very ancient one adopted before any controversy about it. He expressed no regret that he had, I suppose, all his life accepted and repeated this accusation against the authorities of the Roman Church,—that believing the ten commandments to have been given to Moses by God on Mount Sinai and written by the finger of God on two tables of stone, they had, with an almost incredible impiety, dared to suppress one which seemed to condemn their religious practices. The fraud appears a small matter as compared with the audacity. They read in their Scriptures

how one who ventured to touch the ark containing the sacred tables was struck dead. What might they not fear who erased anything of what God had written on them? One could only account for such a proceeding by the supposition that the said authorities were themselves incredulous and the whole Roman system one vast swindle maintained from age to age for the benefit of the impostors who thrive on it. Such a conclusion my father would not have hesitated to accept, but this does not justify the circulation of an unverified assertion in proof of it.

“I had been told in the same way that Unitarians had taken the first eighteen verses of the Gospel of St John out of ‘their Bible’ (a book I have not yet come across), because they could not explain them in accordance with their own unbelief. Indeed I have never met a man absolutely convinced of the truth of his own faith who would scruple to use arguments in support of it which he must have doubted to be sound and to make statements of which he had never enquired into the truth. So the best of Catholics malign Protestants, and the best of Protestants malign Catholics, all in the interests of ‘the Truth,’ which each presumes to be his exclusive possession.

“This period of my life seems to me to have lasted long, but that is a delusion which comes of mistaking depth for breadth. It was really but a few days, that I spent dividing my time between the ‘Fathers’ who were my hosts and teachers, and the father and mother under whose loving care and strict authority I had grown up. I was rightly advised at the Oratory that it would be best for me to bring to an end the interviews so distressing to both sides. Father Dalgairns had procured me a situation as an assistant at St Mary’s College, Oscott, and he suggested that I should at once leave for Birmingham, and stay there in lodgings till the College opened for the

winter term. I assented gladly, and on the 14th of August—the Vigil of the Assumption of the Virgin—I took leave of my parents for the last time. I remember nothing of the parting, nor would I recall it were it in my power to do so. Dalgairns lent me ten pounds, which I afterwards repaid. What should I have done without so kind a friend? Would my father have given me anything to go on with till I was settled? I do not know. The only thing I asked for was what at the last moment I found myself without—a pocket handkerchief, and so I went on my way.

“ Before concluding this chapter, I will give some extracts from a long letter of my dear mother’s, showing how this great event in my life shaped itself to those who had known me best and continued to love me still, spite of all the faults and failures of which, rightly and wrongly, they accused me. The letter was written to a ‘very dear friend’ who had asked to be informed how my perversion had come about :—

‘ It is five years since our poor child fell in with a Roman Catholic,<sup>1</sup> and with the ardour of youth and believing himself to be fortified with truth, he combated the arguments with which he was assailed, but his crafty opponent—for I believe that he was a Jesuit—overturned him and contrived to insinuate his poison into his mind. Poor child, he was then but sixteen, simply instructed in God’s Word and entirely a stranger to such arguments !

‘ All this was done stealthily, but we became aware of the evil, and it caused us great sorrow at the time, for it was some three or four days before he would yield his ground to us.

‘ Here our anxieties were first awakened for our

<sup>1</sup> “ A master at Mr Murray’s, of whom I have written above. He was a High Churchman, and had been such all his life.

poor child, and we sought to keep an eye watchfully over him. The evil not only appeared to be eradicated, but the truth, in which he had been nurtured, seemed to have reached his heart. Neither his papa nor myself indeed were fully satisfied, yet friends and those quite competent to judge wondered that we could doubt of his conversion. He seemed to love his Bible, he read it diligently, and he was used to carry a Greek Testament in his pocket. When at school he would bring or write all his difficulties to his papa, and a letter from him he counted "his great joy." When at home he would accompany his father to his Scripture readings and he would afterwards tell him, and very intelligently, of crude opinions advanced by one or another at these meetings. At this time he was greatly taken with the Biography of Henry Martin (the missionary), and often referred to it with an ardently expressed desire to devote himself to missionary labours. All this was an occasion of much thankfulness with us, and it continued for a year or so. Then I observed decline, and darling Apphia, who had known his exercises of mind, was greatly grieved by his inconsistencies, for she watched over her brothers with all of a mother's anxieties. Well, I saw plainly that there was no heart change, but he held the truth and tenaciously too. He had always been religiously inclined with an active mind, tender feeling and scrupulous conscience.

'We were fully satisfied of the soundness of his views when in the summer of '60 he joined us at Keswick, and there it was his sad sad hap to meet Mr Francis Newman.<sup>1</sup> I strictly warned him against

<sup>1</sup> "Really I talked of religion to him but once, and then it was to tell him how I reposed on the authority of the Anglican Church, and so rid myself of doubts. His brief reply I have never forgotten, though it did not, I think, much impress me at the time. 'Well, of course, if I am told that a certain Jewish youth was Almighty God, I want some evidence to support the statement.'



making any acquaintance with Mr Newman, telling of his avowed opposition to the name of Jesus and His blessed word. His papa was not with us, and despite my warning and all my vigilance, he got to know Mr N., and here again our poor child, all unused to such arguments, became the victim of this wily one. Taken with Mr N.'s address and intellect, the poor unwary one was easily, I fear, entangled in his meshes. Yet it was but few opportunities, two or three perhaps, that he had of seeing him.

'After this he began to question the inspiration of the Scriptures and argued with his papa against the doctrine of substitution. But this did not seem to us to hold his mind, for we perceived that his former bent "to enter the Church" strongly possessed him. Last summer I was alone with him in the Isle of Man, and I hailed this as an opportunity of getting an ascendancy over his mind, but it failed me. He was still an occasion of disquieting and sorrow to me. Yet he was loving and careful for me.

'Last Easter we perceived a leaning to Popery, but the step that he has taken was most remote from our thought. On giving up our house last June, we went to Ireland, and the same day he left us for Burwell, where he was to continue his studies for his degree. He was slow in writing to us, and this occasioned us anxiety, but still the awful step we never for one moment imagined. Indeed, his frequently expressed desire "to enter the Church" would alone have removed such suspicion. However, the Church as a profession we decidedly opposed, and he always yielded to us, saying that, however much he desired it, still, in deference to his parents, he gave it up. His letter, written just after the awful step, is a very remarkable one, and painfully interesting. Filial affection so held him that day by day he was tempted to commit suicide, and he was so conscious of the devil's grasp as his instigator that it nearly drove him mad.

His conclusion then was that suicide would be the greater trial to his parents.<sup>1</sup>

‘The texts, “He that loveth father and mother more than Me, etc.,” decided him at length, he said, to take the step. He writes tenderly, expressing much sorrow because of our sorrow, but there is the firm determined resolve to uphold the Roman Catholic creed.

‘In London, as he came to me daily, he would read to me any portions of the Scriptures that I might select, and he would attend to arguments from his papa—clear and unanswerable—but yet utterly inefficacious to move him.

‘Now our firm persuasion is that God has in retribution given our poor child over to the delusion. For his course was a daring one, a God-provoking one.

‘I tremble to write such things of our own, our dearly loved child, but—nurtured as he was in the truth, giving it the full assent of his mind, and professing to have received it into his heart—he *then* read works that his father or myself or any aged man of God established in the truth, would have shuddered to handle; thus daringly playing with such fearful consequences. The intellect that God had given him, and it was no mean one, he daringly used in reflecting on the divinity of the Son of God, and disparaging the inspiration of His blessed Word. And God has now given him over to strong delusion that he should believe a lie.

“Our gracious Lord, we believe, has shewn us so far, and seeing His way has somewhat alleviated the bitterness of our trial, still is our sorrow great for our poor child.

<sup>1</sup> “My own words undoubtedly support these statements, but I believe that, written as they were under the influence of strong emotion, they greatly exaggerate the seriousness of my mental state during the months preceding my conversion. Thoughts of suicide and madness did from time to time occur to me, but never seriously occupied my mind.

‘His poor papa writes with heaviness of spirit, it is day by day the “one sorrow is heavy on me,” or words to that effect. Yet there are passing beams from His blessed presence, and it is a cause of much thankfulness to me that he has not been hindered from his Master’s work by this affliction but is still up and doing.’

“Alas, my poor dear mother, if you could have but understood that for us, ‘that purblind race of miserable men,’ truth is just what a man troweth or trusteth in and not the Eternal Reality which ‘no man has seen nor can see,’ and that therefore we should be content to leave to each to judge for himself, and not try to enforce what we trow upon another, or lament that he does not see as we do where all alike are dim-eyed and short of sight.

## CHAPTER VI

### LIFE AT OSCOTT COLLEGE

“FOR the first time in the twenty-two years I had lived, I found myself released from all authority except such as I submitted to of my own free will. I found a lodging at Birmingham close to the Oratory, and I could do as I liked without reference to or fear of my parents or masters. Happily a stronger and more august power than either had laid hold of me, and I gave my soul in willing subjection to Holy Church. The first evening I sought out a priest, recommended me by Father Dalgairns, and, the next day being the Feast of the Assumption, heard, for the first and only time, Father Newman preach at the High Mass. It was a fortnight before the College of St Mary at Oscott would open, and I must have spent the whole time in pious reading and prayer and visiting churches. The only thing I remember is that I was strongly tempted to buy a novel with an attractive title which I saw in a shop window. It was no sin, I knew, to read a novel, but I felt that it would trouble the even flow of my thought in the channel of spiritual things, and perhaps make other reading less grateful to me. So I forbore and have always been glad that I did overcome this petty temptation. I was in for a new and deep experience of life, and it was for my salvation that I should realise it to the full. A thrilling story of adventure, such as I took this book to be, would have let me down to the old level from which I might have been unable to lift myself again. With

extreme difficulty I had got through 'the narrow gate' and found myself on 'the straitened way' of an earnest and developed life. To have swerved from it so soon might have led me back into the broad way of a life of self-seeking, self-pleasing, which is truly the perdition of the soul.

"I went to Oscott at the beginning of September, and was most kindly received by the President, Dr Northcote, himself an Oxford convert. In consideration of my youthful appearance, for I should have been taken for not more than nineteen, I was not put in charge of a class, but had to take two or three pupils who required special instruction. I soon discovered, however, not probably as soon as they did, that I was not competent to teach them.

"I frankly communicated my difficulties to Dr Northcote, and he transferred me to the more congenial post of librarian, for which I was really competent. I had been brought up to treat books with care, and had acquired an almost superstitious reverence for them, so that I could not endure to injure or deface them.

"My business now was to make a catalogue of the old library, which owed many of its most valuable books to Cardinal Wiseman, a former President of the College. I had learnt the art from Henry Bradshaw, a true book-lover, who honoured me with his friendship. He was at the time Librarian of the University, and his devotion to liturgical studies no doubt had a certain influence in opening up to me the path Romeward. He rather courted the society of undergraduates, who frequented his rooms and spoke freely before him. He never, in my presence at least, expressed his own opinions about religion, but listened to whatever was said by younger folk. My secession made no difference to him, and he had not a word of praise or blame for my action. He visited me when I was at Oscott, and

was interested in the library, especially in some fragments I had found, in old and broken bindings, of the *Sarum Gradual*. He had advanced me the money to pay all my Cambridge debts when I went down, so that he became my sole creditor, and I repaid him out of my small salary before I left Oscott. I suppose he regarded the Roman faith as that form of religion which was best suited to my own temperament, and he was partly right. He did not realise the underlying vein of scepticism which eventually undermined it, and was, I think, disappointed when I returned to Cambridge ten years later, an unbeliever. Certainly our friendship was not after that time as cordial and intimate as before.

“To the work of the library I took with something of enthusiasm, but my heart was elsewhere. I had not lightly made the great change which had cost so much to parents whom I dearly loved. From the first my thoughts turned to ‘religion’ in its fullest sense—the devotion of the whole self, will and body, to the service of God and His Church. Naturally, my earliest thought was to become one of the Oratorian Fathers, but they were not really ‘religious’ in the technical acceptance of the term; they were bound by no vows, and moreover—a serious consideration—required in general that a member of their Society should have sufficient income to pay at least his share of the common expenses of living. I turned then to the Passionists, a recent Order devoted especially to the contemplation of ‘the Passion of Our Lord.’ While at Birmingham I paid a visit to their convent at Woodstock and spent a couple of nights there, so confirming me in my desire to become one of them. But Dr Northcote spoke to me of the Dominicans, of whose Order he was himself a Tertiary; and when I learnt that its aim had always been to combine the monastic life of prayer and

study with the active life of preaching friars, I felt at once that I had found my 'vocation,' my call of God.

"Father Suffield, the most distinguished preacher of the English Province—whose *Life* I wrote thirty years afterwards, when we had both become Unitarian ministers—paid a visit to Oscott about this time, and a very long interview I had with him confirmed my resolution. It was arranged that I should spend the Christmas vacation as a guest at the convent of the Order at Woodchester. Except that I was lodged in the Guest House, I lived as one of themselves, and, though the discipline was strict and the fare very poor, I thoroughly enjoyed the new experience, and returned to Oscott only to earn enough money to pay off my Cambridge debts.

"In the course of the year which I spent there I had my first and intensest experiences of emotional religion quickened and sustained by the ancient and varying ritual of the Christian Year. After the lapse of more than fifty years I recall the deep impression made upon me by the dramatic ceremonial of Holy Week. Still I remember the words

“‘*Agno miti basia cui lupus dedit venerosa.*’

They come down to us from immemorial antiquity, and, translated into our 'vulgar tongue,' have something childish and almost ridiculous in them. But sung to ancient tones in the guise of a language passed out of common use, they convey an emotion independent of their literal sense. They express the reparation which sixty generations of devout worshippers have made to Jesus for the treacherous kiss of one of their own kind. And all the Roman services, above all those of Holy Week, are, as Dr Jane Harrison writes, 'charged with suggestion, with symbols, with gesture, with half-understood formularies, with all the apparatus of appeal to the emotion and the will : thus ritual deadens the

intellect and stimulates will, desire, emotion. It is this personal *experience*, this sense of immediate, non-intellectual revelation, that again and again rehabilitates a ritual otherwise moribund' (*Alpha and Omega*, p. 175).

"I went through the whole 'Mystery of the Passion,' in the course of the Church services, performed with full effect where the supply of singers and servers was without stint. And my private devotions were all ordered to the same end. I died with Christ, and rose again with Him in the jubilation of the Easter Offices. Most of all, I think, was it at my first Whitsuntide that I was conscious of the Holy Ghost descending in our midst and dwelling upon each of us as on the Day of Pentecost with His sevenfold gifts. The sorrow and the gladness of it all were alike very enjoyable. I was always a Ritualist at heart, and as a boy I used to long to see grand services—often thought when I passed a priest in the street of what splendid ceremonies he must have been a participator. Once when I was about eleven, I dared one Sunday evening to enter a Roman chapel and witnessed, of course without understanding it, the rite of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. I duly confessed my sin afterwards, made some amends for it by my honest judgment that it was 'mummery,' and was forgiven. But the love of ritual kept its hold of me, as it does still in my old age. I should often go to High Mass if I did not, on the one hand, regard it as a sinful indulgence of weak emotion and, on the other, fear that if it became known that I was doing so, friends would suspect that I was 'going back to Rome.' I recognise indeed the danger of doing so, the risk of infection, the liability of a paralysis of judgment under the repeated strain of appeal to the imagination.

"Bradshaw came to see me and spent a few days at the college, by invitation of the President, in the month of



August. When my brother returned to Cambridge in October, he saw Bradshaw and wrote to our father of what he told him. 'C. was looking well and very happy, and was doing the college good service as librarian. He and C. avoided controversy, and no one spoke to him on religious matters. B. does not think he will ever renounce his religion.'

"Yes, I was well and happy indeed that first year of my convert life. Absolutely certain of my faith even when in 'dryness of soul' I knelt before the Tabernacle and felt no devotion and had no sense of the Real Presence. He was there, I knew, my Lord, and my God, but emotion tires and cannot be long sustained. I was deeply religious and striving to live worthy of the vocation with which I was called, and looking forward eagerly to the higher life of complete surrender on which I was presently to enter.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONVENT LIFE

“ON September the 4th I left Oscott for Woodchester, where I presently entered upon an eight days’ Retreat, spent in silence and prayer, preparatory to receiving the habit of the Order. It was on the 18th I was ‘clothed,’ as they say, and for just nine years I wore the white flannel tunic, scapular and hood, with the black cloak for outdoor and winter wear which distinguishes the Dominicans and gives them the queer resemblance to penguins. On the following day I received the ecclesiastical tonsure at the hands of the Bishop of the diocese. So I became a ‘cleric’ or clerk, with all privileges appertaining to this estate. There followed the monastic tonsure, which consists in shaving of the whole head, leaving only a crown or circle of hair about an inch long. ‘The comparative merits of various kinds of tonsure,’ says the *Catholic Dictionary*, ‘became a subject of violent controversy in the seventh and eighth centuries.’ No doubt it is of pre-Christian origin, and the purpose at all times was to put upon the man devoted to religion a mark which could not be easily removed. I had some difficulty myself in effacing the tonsure when, nine years later, I abandoned the habit, and the first time I went to have my hair cut I was afraid that it would be suspected that I was an escaped convict.

“And now I was a friar, but as yet only on trial, liable at any time to be dismissed and free to depart if I were so minded.

“There had been a difficulty about my being received into the Order, arising out of the fact that I was penniless and the English Province very poor. I heard afterwards that the London fishmonger who supplied the convent at Woodchester sent them his staler fish, because they were so irregular in their payments, living as they did on ‘the charity of the faithful.’ The cost of a novice, who of course could earn nothing by missions or masses, was computed at £20 a year—a pitiful sum for a man’s maintenance, but more than the Procurator or Manager of a community of 25 or 30, living on alms, could undertake to add to his liabilities. This difficulty was got over by the intervention of the General of the Order, who made a visitation of the English and Irish Provinces in the summer of 1863, and hearing of me, and I think interviewing me at Oscott, determined to take me to Rome on his return journey.

“Accordingly I left Woodchester immediately after my ‘clothing,’ and after spending a week with the Fathers in London, who, while their church and convent were building, lived in a private house in Kentish Town, went on my way. It was from here I wrote to my father the following letter :—

*Sept. 22, 1863.*

‘MY DEAREST FATHER,—I write to you to let you know of my new movements, for whatever course you may take towards me, this I feel bound to do in duty towards one who can never cease to be my father. Ever since I joined the Church I have been intending (as I told you before at Brompton) to join some religious Order. I have at last done so, but, according to the law of the Church, I cannot bind myself to any Order till after a full year’s trial of it. I have therefore entered the Dominicans and shall go to Rome for this year’s noviciate, and, if I succeed both in health and

otherwise, I shall take the vows and probably stop in Italy till I am a priest (four or five years).

‘The separation between us can scarcely be greater than it is ; but, worthless as you believe it, you will at least accept it as a sign of no dead affection that every day I pray regularly for my father, mother, brother, and sister. Though now *temporally* it would make no difference to me what religion you were,—as I hope by God’s grace, to leave all to follow Him in poverty, chastity and obedience.

‘I love you very much, my dear father, I am very sorry that I have been so ungrateful and good-for-nothing a son. I repent of all but that which you think the worst. All my debts are paid now. May God, through the Precious Blood of Jesus, forgive the sinful extravagance and all the sin and folly of the past.

‘Any letters will reach by being directed to Charles Hargrove, Convent of S. Sabina, Rome. I would like you to know plainly that they will be given to me open, as this is a rule in all convents. I give up my own will utterly if I wish to be a friar.

‘All love to darling mama, Josie, and Bessie. Ever my dearest father,—your loving son.

“To this I received, or perhaps did not receive, an answer from my poor mother, of which a part copy in my father’s handwriting is now in my possession.

“‘It could hardly be a surprise to us,’ she wrote, ‘the step you had taken—indeed anything concerning you hardly could now,—but we did think that before taking such a step, which probably will separate you from one or both of us for ever in this world, and as we fear eternally if God in His mercy do not intervene, you would have made some proposal to bid farewell to your parents. But so it is.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>“No, I could not and ought not to have done so. The shock might have been too much for my mother, who, from the time of my ‘conversion,’ had been suffering with weakness of the heart, and such a meeting would have been equally useless and painful to them and to myself.

“The reason why I did not answer your last letter from Oscott was that it carried such an air of assumption, not to say arrogance, showed such a want of filial respect or affection and so much of what I could not but consider as untruthful that those to whom I shewed it concurred with me in thinking that the time had come to decline any further correspondence. From the surveillance which you indicate in your last letter there scarcely seems much object in writing. Oh, my poor child, had you been as obedient to God and the word of His Grace as you are to man and his arbitrary impositions, how different had it been with you now! But I commend you to God; you have placed yourself beyond the control of your parents, but you cannot place yourself in this world beyond the control of His Grace.’

“She was a wise and loving mother to us, and I never for a moment ceased to esteem and love her. But no regrets, no protests of affection could bridge the gulf which yawned between us. To her, ‘The Truth’ meant the body of doctrine which they had put together out of discordant Scriptures. To me it meant the teaching of the living Church to whose keeping God had committed the revelation made to men by writing and by word of mouth. To her and my father it seemed arrogance that I should be telling them where they were mistaken, untruthfulness when I would set them right about the teaching and practice of a Church of which they knew no more than could be learnt out of Protestant books of controversy.

“I left London on the 22nd of September and, meeting the General at Marseilles, took the boat for Civita Vecchia, and arrived at Rome on the 30th. It was the feast of St Jerome, the scholar saint who translated the Old Testament out of the Hebrew into the language of the Western Church, and fervent champion of the orthodox faith. From

him I took my 'name in religion,' and the same evening, leaving Christian and surname by which I had hitherto been known behind me, began my new life as Frater Hieronymus, Fra Girolamo, Brother, and, later on, Father Jerome.

"The 'simple noviciate' on which I now entered is a wise and salutary measure imposed upon all religious Orders by decree of the Council of Trent. It is a time of probation, usually of one year, which may not be shortened by a single day. During this time the novice shares the life of the community to which he desires to bind himself by vow. He is subject to the discipline of the convent and trained to full observance of the rules and constitution of the Order. If he fails in health or resolution, if in the judgment of his superiors he does not show himself fitted for the religious life, and does not give proof of a true 'vocation' or call of God to the monastic state, he will be dismissed. On the other hand, he is himself free to depart at any time. The clothes he came in are kept throughout this year ready for his use, and he may have them back in exchange for the religious habit belonging to the community which he has been allowed the privilege of wearing. Any property he may have brought with him will be returned to him, nor can he renounce such property in favour of the Order while a simple novice. Should he resolve to leave, he may do so, without any blame or unpleasantness on the part of the authorities. For even if it were in accordance with the Church law, and there were no fear of the intervention of the State, it would be of no advantage to the community to keep an unwilling or unfit youth in its membership. But so long as he stays on or is allowed to stay, he is under the strictest observation. No other studies are allowed than such as appertain to the religious life. No books except such as tend to nurture the spirit of piety, devotion, self-discipline, humility. It was of course a main

object of this discipline to wean us from the world, its standards of conduct, its associations, its friendships, even from the ties of family, to which we should, if proved worthy, be henceforth united only in love and prayer. We accepted a new name, and the old one ceased from use except in formal communications. We were not absolutely forbidden correspondence with our nearest relations, but it was rarely permitted. I can find only one letter of this year of probation written before I had received that which my mother wrote to me on my leaving England.

*‘ November 1864.*

‘ MY DEAREST MOTHER,—It is a very difficult thing to write to you because our sympathies are so far asunder that I can say little to interest you. I was afraid that you would think my last letter a forgery, for through haste and bad materials it was written in a hand very unlike my own. But I have now been a month in Rome and in a Roman monastery getting some experience about the “infidel” monks. Of course nothing I can say would much affect you, for though I must have far better opportunities than any Protestant, yet they only who are our professed enemies and utterly ignorant both of our religion and our private life are considered competent judges.

‘ I have had no letter from you now since August or July, and this is the third I have written. I can, of course, understand why you do not write, but this cannot absolve me from the duty I owe to you as my parents. And why am I thus separated from you, and treated as a disgrace to the family, as if guilty of some shameful immorality? Because I have availed myself of the right which I used to be taught belonged to every Protestant, the right of private judgment. I have interpreted God’s Word to mean exactly what it said, and by an extraordinary grace, which I was indeed far from deserving, have been enabled to follow

in exceeding difficult ways the path into which conscience forced me. *Now* it matters little what I have left, for if you had been Catholics I should have been in no very different position in respect of you. All of us here have left everything to obey the words of Our Lord, "If any man will be perfect, etc." Are there no Protestants who desire to be perfect, or have they a better way than Our Lord's? And now I have nothing, or rather am trying to have nothing, for the very few things that I have must remain my own for a year of probation. But thank God I am separated even from these, and, though I was rather opposed in doing so, I left them in England, and have nothing here but a few books and the suit of clothes I left in. I beseech you all not to think that my affection for you is gone. You must consider my prayers worthless, but still they are a sign of love, and I never cease to pray daily for you all and my poor country.

'My love to my very dear father and brother and sister,—Your loving son.'

"To me it was indeed, until I gradually became used to it, a time of trial. At Cambridge I had too much liberty, much more than was good for a youth. I could read what I liked, go where I liked, weekday and Sunday, choose what friends I fancied, live after my own way in every respect, hampered only by lack of means. Now I was under control in every respect, a control the purpose of which was to mould me anew to the type of a Dominican Friar. I was to 'put off the old man' of the 'world' out of which I had come, the world in which it was admitted that multitudes led godly lives, but which was not 'religion,' the higher calling.

"I have no complaint to make in this matter. On the contrary, I should have much to complain of if the way into



the Order I desired to belong to had been made easy for me—if I had been allowed any freedom which would have to be retrenched when I had fully and for life committed myself to the Rule.

“But it was hard—harder for me than for others, my fellow novices, ten or a dozen in number. I was a foreigner, I could not understand their speech, and I have always been slow in picking up a strange tongue. The Master of Novices spoke English, and that was a great comfort to me; but though very kind and sympathetic, he was my superior, not my friend. Then the food, the climate, the menial work—for very rightly we had to do everything for ourselves except cooking—were uncongenial.

“Many a time I was tempted to give up and ‘return to the world,’ which I could have done without reproach or disgrace. I thank God that I was able to persevere. My aim was, I see now, wholly mistaken, but to have turned from it because it was too high, too difficult, would have been spiritual ruin.

“So I bore up through the long months—the Roman winter, which that year was exceptionally cold, and fire there was none except in the kitchen; the early spring whose almond blossom brought cheer to my heart; the long, hot, dry, dusty summer. And now the time drew near so ardently longed for, of my profession or taking of the vows. And here again a precaution is taken by the Church, under a decree of Pius IX, against the delusion which the year’s probation may have fostered, in favour of religion. Seventeen is the earliest age at which vows may be made, but it may prove too early for an irrevocable decision. Accordingly there are ‘simple’ vows and ‘solemn.’ The latter are irrevocable: they make marriage invalid, and the possession of private property theft. The former may be, and often are, dispensed from on

reasonable grounds approved by the Holy See ; marriage of a person still bound by them would be a mortal sin, but not invalid ; and he surrenders, in taking them, the use of his property, but not the ownership. So that a way of return to the world is still possible and permissible under ecclesiastical law, though it would not be made easy.

“A German count was in the same year with me at Santa Sabina. He had been an officer in the Austrian Army, and was a young man of wealth and distinction. He distinguished himself among the novices by his fervour and strict observance to the Rule. He was a gain to the Order in every way, and would, it seemed, be a shining light in time to come—such a one as in a secular society might be thought of as a future general. So it seems to me now, but in those days we had all discarded the very thought of future greatness ; ambition there was none amongst us except of humble saintship. Well, for some three years he lived an exemplary life, and we all looked up to him as morally and intellectually our superior. Then came a falling off. He became slack and discontented, finally applied for a dispensation, and left us. Years after I heard of him as a landowner in North Germany, notorious for his strict Catholicism. I mention this case as showing that even where it would be of the greatest advantage to keep a novice bound by simple vows, the Order does not interfere if he wishes to leave. He will, no doubt, be told that he imperils his salvation, but not that he is committing an unpardonable sin. He may yet be ‘a good Catholic,’ though he has failed to respond to the higher call.

“After the customary eight days’ retreat, spent in silence, meditation, spiritual reading, and prayer, I was received into the Order on the first of October, the eve of the great feast of Our Lady of the Rosary—a feast observed with more than ordinary devotion among the Dominicans, who claim

the universal devotion of the Rosary as especially theirs because, says their tradition, it was taught to their founder by the Blessed Virgin herself.

“Kneeling before the High Altar where I had lain prostrate during the preliminary prayers, I promised ‘obedience to God and the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Blessed Dominic’ and to the Prior of the Convent as representing the General of the Order, *quod ero obediens tibi successoribus tuis usque ad mortem*. By these same words hundreds of thousands, men and women, had bound themselves since the day when the founder of the Order first made his profession before the Pope Honorius III in 1216. With these, all the living on earth and the holy dead, I now entered into a fellowship not of sentiment only but of a binding agreement. I gave up my free will and my rights as a man and a citizen into the hands of my superiors, and to their bidding I was subject in all things least and greatest, so far as what they ordered was not manifestly contrary to the constitutions of the Order by which we were all alike bound.

“Of these laws, accepted from the beginning or from time to time enacted by the General Chapter, the aim always kept in view was ‘that the brethren should acquire the virtues, intellectual as well as moral, which are specially necessary alike to their own perfection and to the saving of souls.’ The former is the professed aim of all religious orders: monk, friar, nun, of every sort and condition, are in this distinguished from good Catholics living in the world, that they are all under obligation to strive after the perfect life. Others may be content to ‘keep the commandments’ of God and the Church. In ‘religion’ those who make no effort towards the more perfect life commit mortal sin and are in peril of damnation. Beyond this common obligation each Order has its own more or less distinctive

purpose, and that of the Preaching Friars is to minister to the salvation of souls in every way by which this may be attained. So they devote themselves to the work of pulpit or confessional or study and teaching and writing, each as he has the gift and the superior directs.

“Granted the premises—a lost world, salvation by faith and the sacraments, heaven expectant of the redeemed, and hell eager for its victims, the whole system on which orthodox Christianity is based—granted this, the Dominican ideal appears to me now both splendid and practical. An army united by the strictest discipline, its soldiers loosed from every earthly tie, vowed to unquestioning obedience, their only business to fit themselves ever more perfectly for the fight against the hosts of darkness which beset the souls of men—what could be more magnificent? Protestants have now and then conceived of something of the kind, and their schemes have come to naught because there fails the authority which imposes upon will and mind, and compels obedience as due to God Himself.

“The form of profession, it will be observed, is only a promise to obey, for this is the beginning and the end and the perfection of the religious life. It implies, as a matter of course, the vows of poverty and chastity, for he who gives up his own will in all things gives up thereby the disposal of his goods and of his body and the ties of family. No more than a soldier can take with him to the front his wife and children can a monk, who should be always at the front in Holy War, be encumbered by earthly cares. So he renounces from the day of his enlistment the right to own anything, great or little; even the use of the singular possessive pronoun is forbidden in communities of strict observance: one must not say, ‘I have lost my Breviary,’ or ‘my shoes,’ for they are not his, but he will say ‘our Breviary,’ ‘our shoes.’ They are

only loaned to him for his use. In regard to chastity, the rule is the same for all unmarried men or women whether 'religious' or living in the world. Every deliberate violation of it is mortal sin, but the religious becomes thereby guilty of sacrilege also. And whereas others may at any time marry, this is for him prohibited, and if he is bound by solemn vows, impossible ; he may go through the form ; he cannot be married as the Church counts marriage any more than can a man who marries a woman while his wife is still living be married to her in the eyes of the law.

"Joyfully I laid myself down that night. I felt that I belonged now indeed to Dominic, our Father, to Mary and to God.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONVENT LIFE—CONTINUED

“ON the morrow I began my five years of theological study, the first two devoted to logic and scholastic philosophy by way of preparation for the fuller understanding of the *Summa Theologica* of Aquinas. Already as a simple novice I had learnt that it would be my duty as a member of the Order, ‘night and day to devote attention to those studies which serve to the defence of the Faith and the salvation of souls, by means of which we become truly that which we are called, *Domini canes*—the Lord’s dogs—barking for faith and truth, and justify our right to the name of preachers. Of this kind are the studies of the Sacred Scriptures, of philosophy, theology, and of languages, especially Greek and Hebrew.

“But this is an ideal of the work of the student friar which, though insisted upon repeatedly by General Chapters of the Order, has been rarely, if ever, realised. At Santa Sabina our studies were as thorough as could, I suppose, be found in any of our schools, but to languages we paid no attention. Of Greek few of us knew anything, and Hebrew we took up only for a time and as a voluntary subject. Indeed, if the text of the Vulgate is ‘held for authentic in public readings, discourses, and disputes, and nobody may presume to reject it on any pretence,’ as the Council of Trent declared, and Catholics generally believe, it becomes impossible to maintain any enthusiasm for the study of the

original texts. Except for the purposes of controversy with Protestants, there can be no appeal from the Latin to the Hebrew or Greek.

“The Bible was indeed in constant use among us, and every novice had a copy in his cell. But it was chiefly as a book of devotion that it was read diligently and prayerfully. We did not go to it to find our faith—that we were possessed of. The Church, which through long centuries had preserved the Bible and cherished it, gave us with it the sacred traditions of doctrine and practice older than the New Testament itself, and taught us how to read and understand it. It was true that there were difficulties and the devil might make use of texts to assault our faith. I remember well, sitting once in my cell and reading the Acts of the Apostles, how sorely tried I was by the discourses of Peter in the second and third chapters—‘Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs . . . his servant Jesus whom God raised from the dead.’ The Apostle, chief of the Apostles, seemed to speak as one who believed Jesus to be a prophet, ‘like unto me,’ Moses had said. The thought came to me, ‘St Peter could not have so spoken if he believed that Jesus was God.’ I did not try to find a way out of the difficulty. I believed it was a suggestion of Satan. I put my fingers in my ears and repeated, ‘I believe, I believe,’ till the temptation passed. I was in the position of St Augustine, ‘*Ego Evangelio non crederem nisi me Ecclesiae Catholicae commoveret auctoritas.*’ I too should not have accepted the Bible as an inspired and infallible book had not the Church put it into my hands with the assurance that such it was. It was not reasonable therefore that while submitting to the authority as unquestionable when the character of the book was concerned, I should deny it when the meaning was in doubt. To do so would mean

that I should go back upon my faith in Church and Bible alike. If the Church errs in its interpretation of the Bible, it is not to be trusted, and the Bible can no longer be accepted on its authority. On what authority then ?

“It was in the spring following that I received three visits from English Protestant friends, a very rare event. It did not, I suppose, occur six times in the six years of my noviciate. Such visits were not encouraged, indeed were looked upon with much disfavour, but could not be wholly forbidden, lest suspicion might be aroused that I was confined in the convent against my will, and awkward enquiries ensue. After the first, I wrote to my father :—

‘I was very glad to see one who had so lately seen you, but especially to have the opportunity of assuring you more certainly than I could do by letter, that my affection to you is not diminished and that I should regard it as a thing sorrowful and displeasing to God if it were so. And at the same time, and that too out of love to you and my darling mother, lest a false hope should be worse than no hope, of my inviolable attachment to the Holy Roman faith. O, my dearest father, I was thinking last night if God would only show you what I was when a Protestant, of which you know something, but not much, and then, of which alas you know nothing, what by His grace I have become, it would be enough to convince you that not the devil but His own Holy Spirit has worked in me. It is not that I am in the miserable delusion of believing myself perfect, but that as a newly washed garment appears white and beautiful when compared with one foul and dirty, though it looks poor and contemptible compared with one pure and shining, so is my present life as compared with my past, or again with the perfect life, the life of perfect love. I am indeed little and miserable and full of imperfection, but withal washed in the most precious Blood of Jesus from the



sins of the past, and fortified in the Holy Ghost against the desires and habits of the old life. I know no single pleasure of my old life which I now enjoy. I was always seeking money; now I never have a farthing and am bound by vow never to possess more than is necessary for life and study. I was fond of eating, as my debts testify<sup>1</sup>; now I belong to an Order which fasts (*i.e.* eats but one full meal a day, and meat never, except in case of necessity) for eight months in the year. I delighted in idle talk; now all day long I must sit in silence, except in the short time of common recreation. I enjoyed the use of a large library and dissipated myself among many books; now I have a few books given me and can have no others. All my ways were self-seeking and self-pleasing; now I can say, "For Thy sake, we are mortified all the day." In fact from morning to evening I never have my own will. Everything must be done according to the arrangement of my superiors. In one word, I have nothing of what then seemed good to me and everything which then seemed intolerable—and the consequence? The poor world thinks that monks are very bad, or else very wretched. As to the first, there are plenty of bad monks, though both their number and their badness is immensely exaggerated, monks who are such only in habit; and if these are in a strict community where they must needs observe their rules and their vows, they are of course very miserable, loving the world and unable to enjoy it.

‘But as to those who, leading this seemingly miserable life, strive day by day to draw nigher to God and make Him their riches and pleasure and their all—I deny that they are miserable, from experience of myself, from experience of others, from every life of a saint ever written. No, we are wonderfully

<sup>1</sup> “Poor little debts! the very worst of them was for perhaps a dozen ices in a hot summer.

happy. The special complaint against me ever since I came here is that I am "always laughing."<sup>1</sup>

'And, indeed, when I look to what I have escaped—the eternal pains of hell, the loss of, eternal loss of, God; and to what I have found in the Church—God, my life, my God; and to what I hope—"to see the King in His glory,"—my heart overflows with joy!

'The first months I was in the Church they said I had the fervour of a convert, but after thirty months my exaltation continually augments. It is not that I am or have been without sorrows and trials and temptations, but in the midst of all I can say, "In the multitude of my sorrows Thy consolations have rejoiced my soul." And this leads me to speak of another change that has taken place in me since I came here, it is the love and delight that I have in the Holy Scriptures in place of my former indifference. It is perfectly true that the Church does not put the Bible into the hands of all indifferently, though it gives to all the substance accommodated to their education, etc., such as *Lives of Our Lord*, *Meditations on the Gospels*, and so on. But to others, especially to such as are to be teachers of the Faith, it commends and encourages the study and love of the Scriptures. So it is told of some of our saints that they read God's Word only on their knees. As for myself, I have in my room a Latin and an English Bible and a New Testament to carry in my pocket, and I can say with all my heart according to the psalm which we daily recite in choir, "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste, yea sweeter than honey to my mouth," and "I have rejoiced over Thy Word as one that findeth great spoil!"

'At present I am studying Scholastic Philosophy, which is not so absurd as I used to think when

<sup>1</sup> "This is true, but not the whole truth. Of course there were times of aridity, of desolation, of repressed rebellion. And may not the laughter have been a little hysterical?"

I knew nothing about it. It is perhaps to me of all mortifications the greatest to be tied down to one definite course of study, learning an appointed lesson day by day : but what no worldly considerations were strong enough to make me do, I manage to do now for the love of God.

‘ My dear brother. I was very sorry at first not to be able to write freely to him, but now I see that it is well enough. I would not force religious topics upon him against his will, and I do not know what else I could write about. But my thoughts are often with him, and I say to our Lord, “ Lord, Thou seest him now just returned from Cambridge, sleeping or studying, etc. (according to the time, night or day, at which I happen to remember him) ; keep him and teach him how everything is vanity except Thou, and let but one little ray of Thy light fall upon his soul and he will seek Thee and find Thee and be ten times less unfaithful to Thee than I have been . . . ” One thing I never ask for him, success and prosperity, for I know how immense was the blessing of God to me when He visited me for my sins and filled me with misery.

‘ I have written to you, my dearest father, not expecting an answer, for I do not well see how you could write. Your letters to me of old were principally about religion, and now you cannot write about that except in the way of controversy, which would indeed give me pain, but not in the least move me. I see exactly the same reason for remaining in the Church as I did for entering it—the necessity for a guide who should have a divine promise of never failing. I have found what I sought and much more, and though I certainly cannot pretend to answer every objection made against us (any more than when a Protestant I could answer every objection made against the Bible) yet I remain utterly unshaken. I believe not with the half-belief which is to-day so prevalent, but all and wholly whatever the Church teaches. I

have kissed the Pope's foot, and I should esteem it the highest honour to lay down my life for him.

‘Finally, this letter, which I have written only because of my love to you both and my sorrow that you should think it had grown cold, I conclude as usual with the protest that nothing I have written has been *in any way* suggested to me by others. My letters are read before they are sent ; but in the sight of God I assure you that I have never written anything from dictation, nor even, to the best of my memory, so much as inserted a single sentence or a text suggested to me by another. This letter, as all my others, is as much my own composition as any I ever wrote to you from school or college.

‘With love and reverence to you and my dearest mother, I remain your ever loving son.’

“I think in reading this over the Master of Novices must have found me wanting in the detachment from home ties which becomes the perfect ‘religious.’ But nothing was ever said to me on this score. What answer my father made to it, what impression it made on him, I do not know, for I did not keep any of the few letters I received during my noviciate.<sup>1</sup> He preserved my letter till his death, and it has come into my possession, together with others already quoted, through my brother.

“I think this is a fair account of my general state of mind throughout my years of convent life. I have often asked myself how it would have fared with me spiritually had I belonged to a cloistered Order like the Carthusians, of whom I often thought with humble longing as of a state of life too high for me. There is no answering such questions. I should probably have died early, possibly in ‘the odour of sanctity.’ I might have gone mad, as some have done,

<sup>1</sup> Some of these have since come to light, and will be presented in due course.—L. P. J.

causing the Holy See to mitigate the unbroken silence which the Rule imposes. I might have outlived the ten-year fervour of my youth and grown to be of such as Doré painted, the choir companions of the bewildered and disillusioned 'Neophyte'—reciting their midnight matins according to wont, without devotion or intelligence, these to whose fellowship in prayer and praise he had looked as an anticipation of the worship around the Throne. I might have grown old as ignorant of the world as I was at Santa Sabina, where during three years I never saw a newspaper or heard any news except of the Pope's health and welfare, never troubled with doubt nor vexed with 'the disease of thought,' submitting to convent discipline as an ox to the yoke he has become inured to, strong in bovine stupidity, without aspirations, without enthusiasms, without passions good or bad. I might have rebelled sooner or later, but in an atmosphere where acquiescence is easy and the incitements to energy few and weak, that were not likely.

"Another visitor of the same time wrote to my father:—

'I have to-day seen your son, and write to you about him while my impressions are fresh: I have no heart for sightseeing after seeing him. The waiting-room of the convent looks out on a kitchen-garden, in one of the walks of which a number of the brethren were gaily playing a kind of skittles, with as much animation as a lot of schoolboys.<sup>1</sup>

'After some ten minutes your son came, accompanied by another, both habited alike in white, with their crowns closely cropped. The other was a German, but spoke English fluently. Your son came forward

<sup>1</sup> "I well remember the after-dinner game of bowls and the exclamations of pious Italians as they followed the doubtful course of a ball: 'Dio! Dio! Dio!' Imagine an Englishman crying, 'God! God! God!' after his wayward ball, or even a Frenchman, not to say an English or French religious. But it was a healthy and innocent hour and the only one of the day given to talk and play.

to meet me in a gay, lightsome manner and shook hands warmly. I was struck with his look, which one knows the character of so well but which one cannot name, viz. that of a weak-minded person. This was decidedly marked in his countenance, and I noticed it before I knew which of the two was your son, but he showed no signs of it in his conversation.<sup>1</sup>

‘He immediately entered into conversation about you and his mother, and his whole manner was animated. He looked thinner, younger and more animated than I remember him. I should not have thought him above twenty.’ [I was over twenty-five.] ‘We soon got upon controversy, which he did not shrink from, and this we continued for half an hour, walking in the cloisters and afterwards on the garden terrace overlooking Rome with the Tiber at our feet. I sought to bring him to the Scriptures as unchangeable, and he replied that the Scriptures led him to the Church which was their interpreter. I adduced more than once “the words that I speak shall judge him” ; “My words shall not pass away” ; “Whosoever shall add or take away from the words of this,” and “Ye have made the word of God of none effect through your tradition.” These I sought to keep him to. He answered that the Church was according to Scripture. I specified images, and he said that the image was nothing (in itself), that his brother, who held strong political views, often took off his cap to the statue of Charles the First, and this was in human nature, that we are flesh and spirit not only spirit. I replied that if this was so all images would be of equal worth, while it was notorious that some were

<sup>1</sup> “Something of the kind I have noticed in photographs of myself taken in my convent days. It is the look of one who has surrendered his own personality, who acts and thinks only in accordance with rule and another’s direction. This was the ideal of religious perfection set before me, and I did my best to follow it. Had I stayed in the Order and attained to a position of power and responsibility I should no doubt have changed, but meanwhile all virtue was summed up in obedience, which imports complete submission of will and judgment to the Superior.

regarded as more holy than others. "True," he said, "God has always set apart places, etc., as *e.g.*, Jacob's altar." I spoke of the worship of the Virgin as not found in the Word. This he acknowledged, and said that for good reasons it was kept in the background for some 250 years. He expressed his certain belief in the Immaculate Conception. He generally spoke with a masked smile, but several times I observed a quite anxious look settle on his countenance, as also on the face of his companion, as though the possibility of doubt with its tremendous consequences was seen from afar.<sup>1</sup>

'But shut out from the world it must be with less instrumentality than usual that God must work the change. I told him that his mother and Mr Müller (the Bristol philanthropist) prayed daily for him and were confident of his being brought out of his delusion into the true light. He desired me to say that he was perfectly satisfied in his conscience as to his present position, and that he knew he might fall that night but for the grace of God helping him. I said (perhaps unadvisedly) that his friends believed he was deluded by Satan, and he replied rather quickly that he prayed God for all heretics. As to his mother's ceasing to write to him, I explained the reason—his apparent arrogancy and assumption. He replied that his mother's letters pained him exceedingly, that they were full of what he regarded as blasphemies, that being fully persuaded he was in the truth his expressions would naturally appear arrogant.

'We touched on infidelity, and I said that I had been interested in the evangelisation of Italy, that Roman Catholicism was breaking down, and the question was: Is anything better to be substituted for

<sup>1</sup>"I think he was mistaken about this. Serious men engaged in controversy on matters of literally infinite importance cannot be free of a certain anxiety lest what they believe to be the truth may be discredited by incompetence or ignorance of the proper reply on their part. For myself I cannot remember that I was ever troubled by such doubts as orthodox Protestants might suggest.

it? I said I believed infidelity was the better of the two, for an infidel believed in the power and wisdom of One he knew not and permitted the Gospel to others, while the Roman Catholic put an image in God's place and excluded the Gospel. He seemed anxious to answer this, and said that before he became a Catholic he held in contempt all you said about the blood of Christ, while now his whole trust was in it and that there was much more in common between himself (?and you) than there was with the infidel.

'The Superior sent a message that the interview must end, but he was desirous to continue it a little longer and went away to obtain permission. On his return he expressed himself most anxious that I should assure you that he was happy and certain in his faith. I said that I believed he had a horror of great darkness to go through before the true light rose upon him, and he replied, "I have been through that already."

'Shaking hands with both during these last sentences, I parted from them. I have tried to give you a faithful account of what passed: I fear it reads harshly, yet our interview and parting were cordial. The Lord grant the earnest prayer of faith on his behalf. It does indeed move one's heart to think of him and others like him, especially if they have a sincere desire to serve God.'

"Writing three weeks later, the same correspondent says:—

'Yesterday I had another and a much longer conversation with your son, lasting more than an hour. I think the whole time I was the aggressor, and I cannot say his answers satisfied me of anything except his sincerity, nor can I say that my statements seemed to shake him. I had determined to use no weapon but what came out of God's armoury.'

"There follows a long account of our arguments. Scripture texts adduced on one side and the other, like



arrows, as is usual in all such controversy, hitting and missing without effect, the result depending on who has the best-filled quiver and is most skilful in this intellectual archery.

“The writer continues :—

‘I gave him your letter to me to read, for I hoped that a father’s thoughts would have great influence, and to touch nature’s chord is good in itself. He remarked your saying that you believed he sometimes had serious doubts, and he expressly wished to be clear on this, and to be understood by you. He said that any doubts—and he has them sometimes—are on fundamentals on which you and he would be quite agreed, such as the existence of God, the Divinity of our Lord, etc., but they are not entertained by him for one instant, but despised and prayed against—the grace of God only keeps him safe,—that he has not one doubt about the Church or his position in it.

‘It is beyond my power to give you an impression as to your dear son’s state. I believe that he and a good many others are possessed by or possess a spirit of entire and most exalted consecration, as they think, to the Lord Jesus. I believe their spirit is ‘Let us go and die with Him.’

“Between these two visits of an Evangelical Protestant I received other two of a very different sort. The visitor was a man whose acquaintance I had made at Cambridge, a Fellow of one of the Colleges and a leader among the little set of High Church undergraduates. He had lately been appointed rector to a poor and extensive parish in the east end of London, and having thereupon married, was now travelling on his honeymoon. He writes to my brother :—

‘Last Tuesday afternoon I walked up to Santa Sabina, which stands in a most beautiful situation on the summit of the Aventine. On ringing the bell, one of the lay brothers let me in. I asked permission

to see "Fra Girolamo," as he is now called, and after long parleying, because I had not come at the proper time, my card was taken with the promise to ask leave of "the Master of Novices." After about ten minutes' waiting, the Master came and told me I might see him. I found him waiting for me by the cloister. He seemed quite delighted to see me, and shook me warmly by the hand, beginning at once to enquire about you, saying, "You will be able to tell me about my brother." I proposed to walk in the garden. One of the other novices who could speak English accompanied us, as it seems they are not allowed alone with strangers. We walked up and down a long time, talking of many things. He said he had received his mother's last letter, and had one written in reply, but not yet posted—waiting for an opportunity to send it by hand, for the postage was so expensive that they could not afford it, the convent being very poor. So I gave him some stamps, poor fellow! and he ran upstairs to get his letter, which I would have posted for him that night, but I found it was overweight.

'Now I must tell you he complained somewhat bitterly of the letters he had from home, saying that they told him no news and were filled with reproaches which only irritated him. Then he began to speak to me about himself, and assured me he was most entirely happy. The great struggle of his life was when he left his first Church and became a Roman Catholic. But now the trial was past and over, and he realised the most complete happiness and peace. "Then," he said, "I knew nothing of God. I did not love Him. Now I feel I know and love Him with all my heart and soul. If only my father could know how happy I am, he would be convinced that I had taken a right course." You will see how impossible it is to argue with a man who has such an inner testimony that he is in the right.

‘After a while, the Master of Novices joined us, and while your brother was gone to fetch his letter, I said I was glad to see him looking well and happy and in good spirits. He replied, “Yes, he is sometimes in almost too good spirits. He is a very good young man, and has great interior peace.” It was getting towards sunset when I left, promising to call again before I left Rome.

‘Of course your brother looks altered in his new dress with his close-cut hair except in one outer ring, but his face is little changed. He wears a white flannel gown, with a crucifix and beads in his girdle.

‘Now I must tell you my own firm conviction is *that he will never retrace the step he has taken*. You must make up your mind to look upon the separation as lifelong. He has convinced himself that the Church of Rome is infallible, and so he accepts unhesitatingly all that she teaches. I fear you will never see him again in our Mother Church of England. It is very sad to think, but there is a calm assurance about him that makes me feel morally certain that this is his fixed determination. You can but pray for him as an erring and mistaken and misguided brother, but at least you may believe in him as thoroughly earnest—entirely conscientious.

‘And may I say without seeming to interfere or dictate—when you write to him do not give him unnecessary pain by reproaching him for what he has done? I think letters in that tone would gradually alienate him, and that he would cease to reply altogether. He enquired about you with so much interest that I am sure he would like to hear news of you if your father would permit you to write to him from time to time. The postage must be paid. It is 1 d. to Rome.’

“Writing a fortnight later, he continues the story :—

‘I have had another afternoon with your brother. I did not see him on the Wednesday as I expected,

for he was to be ordained on the Saturday following (Easter Eve) and was engaged in spiritual exercise by way of preparation. The Master told me he was to take the two first orders, Ostiaries<sup>1</sup> and Lector. These are two of the four minor which precede the greater orders, Subdeacon, Deacon, and Priest. As I wished very much to be present at a Roman ordination, I went early in the morning to St John Lateran. There were many ceremonies before the ordination began—the blessing of the font, the baptism of a Jewess and her confirmation. I saw your brother receive the orders from the Cardinal Vicar of Rome. The first was conferred by touching the Keys of the Church, the second by a book. The whole service lasted about seven hours. I walked back with him after it, and had some dinner in the Irish Convent of San Clemente, which is much nearer than Santa Sabina, and as they were all fasting, you may be sure they needed some food before a long walk. I am more than ever convinced that he is fixed in his determination to abide by the step he has taken, and his taking Holy Orders is of course placing him more irrevocably beyond any prospect of a return.

‘It will not surprise you when I tell you that he and his Master did their best to try and unsettle me in my allegiance to our Mother Church. Many of their arguments were very clever and ingenious, but I have seen quite enough here to make me more than ever thankful that my lot has been cast in the English branch of Christ’s Holy Church.’

“In his assurance that I should never quit the Church our devotedly orthodox friend overlooked ‘the little rift within the lute’—the temptations to heresy which he would have agreed with me were to be regarded as coming from Satan. No, they were symptoms of questionings—silenced

<sup>1</sup> The office of the Ostiary is to open and shut the church doors, see that the church is kept clean, and the ornaments put away in the vestry.

by violence of will and fear, but not answered, and muttering and murmuring while they waited for gathered strength and more favourable conditions to make themselves heard and respected. He was right so far that an orthodox Protestant of any description I could never be again. The free thinker I never completely ceased to be. Down deep in my unconscious soul I was that always, from the time that I had begun to think for myself.

## CHAPTER IX

### VISITORS AT SANTA SABINA

“EVENTS there were few or none in our convent life. The noises of the world did not penetrate our deep seclusion. We did hear of war between Austria and Prussia, of the defeat of Austria, of some scandal of the day which was just mentioned as edifying proof of Protestant depravity. I cannot remember that we were told of any other happening of those three years I spent at Rome. They are to-day for me as epochs of history which I know or only through books. We had occasional visits from a Cardinal or some distinguished Catholic. Once the Queen of Portugal came to see us, having from the Pope a special dispensation permitting her to enter where no woman was otherwise allowed to set foot. I suppose she was attracted by what she heard of the convent as a model of strict observance. More noteworthy was a visit paid us by the eloquent Carmelite monk, Father Hyacinth Loyson, who gave the novices an address, of which I remember nothing. The next time I saw him was in Berlin, at the meeting of ‘The International Congress of Free Christian and other Religious Liberals,’ in 1910, both of us grown old in a very different service from that to which we were then devoted.

“Another distinguished visitor was ‘Father Ignatius of Jesus,’ who, as Joseph Leycester Lyne, had been ordained deacon in the Church of England, but on the ground of

his Roman and monastic proclivities had failed to find any Anglican Bishop to priest him. He and I had much in common. His father, an Evangelical Protestant, was bitterly contemptuous of 'Leycester's advanced views' while he was yet a boy, forbade his attending weekday services, and would not allow him to go to Communion oftener than once in two months. Later on he would not hear of his becoming 'a Puseyite clergyman,' 'would not let him come home even to talk matters over, would neither see nor write to him, and literally cast him adrift.' When by the help of friends he had surmounted the difficulties in his way, and, becoming a curate, had made his first attempt at founding a religious Order, the talk which went about was to his father 'gall and bitterness. He would almost sooner have known his son to be dead than see him a monk.' He forbade 'his offending child' to hold any communication with his brothers and sisters for fear he should contaminate them with his abominable Popish ideas.<sup>1</sup>

"It was on Ash Wednesday, 1866, that the self-appointed Benedictine abbot paid us a visit at Santa Sabina, accompanied by Brother Philip, the 'keeper of the keys' at the Norwich Priory. They had travelled through France and arrived at Rome, a quartette such as the world had probably never seen before in monastic costume. With them was a little boy, three or four years old, dressed in the white serge habit of Oblates, who had been offered to the new Order by his mother a year before, and as nurse to him and to the Father—who was in very delicate health—a nun, Sister Ambrosia. Their appearance in the Papal City caused no little excitement and scandal, and the Holy Office made immediate investigation ; but of

<sup>1</sup> "See *Life of Father Ignatius*, by the Baroness de Bertouch, a book well written and full of interest, which as a psychological document has not received the consideration it deserves.

the childlike innocence of the whole party there could be no question. The leader seemed to be a man of promise and of such stuff as saints and founders of religious Orders are made, and he was kindly received by the Pope himself and by all with whom he came in contact. Though certainly not a Roman Catholic, for he acknowledged no authority, yet he had come very near to the Church, and it seemed that he wanted but a little kindness and persuasion to help him over the last and most difficult step and win him, with all his gifts of enthusiasm and personal influence, to the true faith.

“He took all this attention very seriously, as his biographer, writing from his own instructions, shows us, and accepted them as a qualified recognition of his claim to be a genuine abbot and a true, if not quite a Roman, Catholic. But his coming to Santa Sabina must have disillusioned him. He thought afterwards that our object was to induce him to change the Benedictine for the Dominican habit, but no such idea occurred to us. We saw in him one who was ‘not far from the kingdom of God,’ and efforts were directed to inducing him to enter it and become a loyal subject of Christ. Brother Philip was committed to my charge, and I had no difficulty in convincing him of the error of his ways. He would have been ‘received’ at once into the Church, but his superior, who in the meantime had been in the hands of the Master of Novices, took him away by a kind of moral force. Ignatius had fared badly in argument and been reduced to tears. He left with the promise to return the next morning. When he failed to appear I went with the Master to his apartment in the Via Condotti—only to find that he had fled by the early train for Naples, where he arrived, we are told, ‘ill and exhausted,’ and under ‘a cloud of sickness’ made a short stay there before leaving Italy. Brother Philip, on



whom he depended in sickness as his personal attendant, abandoned him and started to walk to Santa Sabina; but without money and unable to make himself understood, tired soon and hungry, 'the inspiration came to him by the way that the Lord desired him to remain a Benedictine,' and he returned at nightfall, to be welcomed as a stray sheep.

"Father Ignatius I met once again. Wholly ignorant as he was of Biblical criticism, he undertook a crusade against the leaders of the Liberal movement in the Church of England. Bishop (then Canon) Gore, as the editor of *Lux Mundi*, Dean Stanley, Dr Jowett ('who said his happiest hours had been spent in translating Plato's abominations for the benefit of the people of England'—a silly and wicked calumny, but what did Ignatius know of Plato?), and Dean Fremantle of Ripon, were in turn attacked, and large sympathetic audiences of ignorant and bigoted people were attracted to hear the monk's denunciations.

"I went simply to hear a speaker who had won for himself an extraordinary popularity, and the thought of taking any part in the meeting had not occurred to me; but I was moved to indignation by the attempt to make this man's 'strong childlike faith, which may be almost expressed in the four words Jesus and the Bible,'<sup>1</sup> into the law of the National Church, by their adherence to which her dignitaries are to be tried, that I could not help rising at the close of the lecture and making a vigorous protest. I had nothing to urge against the lecturer, his views and ways. What I resented was that he would narrow the Church of the whole nation to the limits of what he chose to call orthodoxy. I was not allowed to go on for long. There was some disturbance among the audience, and presently conference on the platform. Then Father Ignatius rose and said, 'I understand that the gentleman who is

<sup>1</sup> " *Life*, p. 524.

speaking is a Unitarian minister. I couldn't listen to him for a moment,' and he left the hall and was followed by the chairman, so that the meeting came to an end. On this I went to the parlour where speakers met before going in, not wishing to renew my protest but just to exchange a kindly word with one whom I met before under such different circumstances. I reminded him of Santa Sabina and Brother Jerome, but when I told him what I was now he would have nothing to say to me. So I went my way. I judged him to be a very simple, ignorant, forceful man, just the stuff of which leaders of popular revolt are so often made, by nature intensely religious, fond of authority and asserting himself against it when exercised by another.

“Though we lived apart from the world, and the ordinary occupations of life were for us as if they did not exist, we had ample compensation in the range and variety of our own life. ‘We keep ourselves to ourselves,’ we might have said, each one of us indeed himself to himself; but while we shut ourselves in from all that ordinary men were concerned about, took no heed to the literature and history, the art and science and philosophy of our time, were deaf and blind to the politics and ambition, the gossip and goings-on, the speculation and philanthropies of the day, we had our own concerns of intense interest and importance. Heaven was very near us, and we were in constant communion of prayer and worship with our near kinsfolk there. The past glowed with the shining of the great host of saints and martyrs, our fellow-men who had lived once as we lived now, and showed us the way into the heavenly glory. The future was no closed book to us, for if we knew nothing of its minor events, we were fully informed of the great culmination to which they all tended—the overthrow of the powers of evil and the final establishment of

the kingdom of God. From the creation and fall of the angels to the great day of Judgment, the whole story was known to us, the interest of it intense, the lessons of it without end. Death was before each of us and prescribed as a constant subject of meditation, but it was not with fear we were taught to regard it, but rather to look to it as the end of the perilous struggle here and the entry into eternal life.

“We were aware indeed that our condition as long as we were in the body was one of terrible danger, and the thought of hell was never very far from us ; but the effect was not to depress, but to keep us humble and guard us against trusting to our life of penitence and prayer to ensure our salvation.

“So our inner life was very full, and ‘news of the day’ was not wanting, as it came to us in the varying offices of the Breviary with its commemoration of the saint or festival after whom the day was called.

“Monotonous or dull assuredly our life was not, though the routine in which it was framed was nearly the same always. Every day at Prime and Terce and Sexts and None we recited the long 119th Psalm, but we never wearied of it.

“No, the life of the cloister is not dull to monk or nun as long as they hold the Faith and are true to their vows, though it be a very hell to such as have lost the spirit of their vocation or too late have come to realise to what a life they have bound themselves.

## CHAPTER X

### RENEWAL OF THE CONFLICT WITH MY FATHER

“ALL correspondence with my brother had been forbidden by our father from the time of my secession to the Church of Rome, and I had attempted none. But for some reason I do not now remember, I wrote the following letter under cover to our former schoolmaster. The answer to it, received from my father, to whom it had been sent, follows :—

‘ CONVENT DI SANTA SABINA,  
‘ MONTE AVENTINO, ROMA,  
‘ *March 18, 1866.*

‘ MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—I should be sorry that you should judge of my affection towards you by the fact of my not writing to you. It is a very difficult thing to me to do (especially under the conditions very naturally imposed upon me). I say especially, because in any case, even if I were permitted to write of those matters of infinite importance which are the reason of our separation, I should be loth to do so unless I knew that you yourself wished it; otherwise it would be useless, perhaps even worse than useless. But excluding such topics, with which it would be easy to fill not a letter, but a long book, of what am I to write to you? My whole life and occupations, my very name and habit, my very thoughts are all closely connected with these very subjects of which I may not speak. In fact religion is my business, whence commonly we are called “religious,” as those whose special duty it is to attend

to the worship of God exclusively. What is required of us is that we should think and do and say nothing which be not for the honour of His Divine Majesty. Certainly I do not profess to have attained to such a glorious perfection, but still, outwardly, we are directed towards it. And then you ask me to write and say nothing of religion. Sometimes I almost fear lest it should be an infidelity to my Master to do so. For some time I have very much thought of you, and prayed for you, and asked others to do the same, because I knew that a most important and decisive point in your life was at hand. I have continually begged of the Lord to give you such a degree as should be best for your soul, remembering His own words, "What shall it profit?"—the best degree you could possibly get and all prosperity—if you do not save your soul. I know for myself that it has not been through success, but through continual contradiction and trouble that I have been led of God into my present state, "*Transivimus per ignem et aquam et duxisti nos in refrigerium.*"<sup>1</sup> I well know the great difference between my old life and yours, that I only reaped what I had not sowed; but what I recognise continually is the greatest mercy of God in giving me immediately the fruit of my sin, and so disgusting me of it and leading me to Him. Many sin and prosper; I sinned and was miserable, under an outward dissipation, miserable exceedingly. And so, though you have not deserved what I suffered, yet I dread for you, my own dear brother, above all things, the prosperity of the world. I have been as the thief who found Jesus on the cross which he justly suffered, and which if he had escaped he would probably have been lost. May God grant you to be as others who left all worldly profit to follow Him. . . .

‘Since a year and a half (after the year’s trial which

<sup>1</sup> “We have passed through fire and water, and Thou hast brought us out into a refreshment.”—Psalm lxxv. 12.

the Church indispensably requires) I have entered into the immense riches and pleasures and liberty of God by the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to death. Truly I can say, "My youth is renewed as the eagle's." I am full of an ever-increasing gladness and exaltation. It is my continual song in the house of my pilgrimage, that of the three children in the fiery furnace, "For He hath delivered us from hell, and saved us out of the hand of death, and delivered us out of the midst of the burning flame, and saved us out of the midst of the fire."

'As to my life here, I am afraid to speak of it. I have never yet described it to anyone who was ignorant of our uses, because to expose such things to those who perhaps even too much admire them, would be but pride; and to others it is only to court the names of hypocrite, fool, or, at best, fanatic, and to expose the goodness of God towards one to contempt. Nevertheless you have some right to hear it. I can only ask you not to judge me.

'We rise at a quarter to three in the morning to say matins in Church, and return to bed at about four until a quarter past five; then till seven we are occupied at mass, choir, and meditation. Then, after a little bread and coffee, we have study of scholastic philosophy and theology up to a quarter past eleven; then choir again; noon, dinner (only the sick or weak are allowed to eat meat); afterwards recreation till half-past one. Then the siesta for an hour, which, in these climates, is absolutely necessary; at a quarter to three, choir; half-past three, study, with meditation in private, more or less, till half-past seven, excluding three quarters of an hour recreation; half-past seven, supper or collation, according to the time; eight to nine, choir and meditation; nine, sleep. We fast about seven months in the year, viz. are allowed one full meal in the day, a very little bit of bread in the morning, and about seven or eight ounces in the evening; of course the

sick have plenty of dispensations, for our object is not to kill the body, but to subject it.

‘Once a week we have a walk for two or three hours, and the wonderful thing is the joy of this life. All have laughing faces, and all are full of brotherly charity. I am an Englishman in the midst of Italians and French, and yet I meet nothing but attention and love, and not I only but all. Is one ill? all become his servants. Is he sad? all are anxious to console him. But sadness is a very rare thing to see amongst us. For in silence and prayer and mortification there is a fount of joy which those know who have tasted it. “Taste and see how good the Lord is.” As to choir, it consists principally in prayer, through the means of the psalms, the prayers which the Holy Spirit of God has Himself put into our mouths. The 119th Psalm we repeat every day, as all priests also are bound to do. But we do not weary of it, because the Word of God is ever new, ever sweeter than honey, and our hearts rejoice over it, as he who findeth great spoil. If since I came to Rome I had gained nothing else than the fondest love of Holy Scripture, I should indeed have become rich. But that is only one thing among many.

‘I beg you if you write to me to tell me particularly how my letters are received. The condition of writing, as if I had no religion, I cannot accept. If, then, I write as I have hitherto, not controversies, for it is useless and exceedingly disagreeable to me, but still of my religion, not to defend it, but to describe it—are my letters welcome? If so, I hold myself bound to write; it is only the honour due to parents. This gratitude is due to parents, who, as our Master of Novices often has told me, have done far more for me than they were at all bound to do, sacrificing themselves for my education, bearing with me in my idle, self-seeking, self-pleasing ways. There are many indeed who press me to write under any condition, but unless my superiors wish it, I cannot do it. I almost doubt

whether it would not be revolting to you. It seems a want of feeling to write about indifferent things, when the question between us is so serious and afflicting. . . .

‘Remember me with all affection to our most dear father and mother, and tell them that I will write soon if my letters are welcome to them. In most sincerely brotherly love, I sign myself with the name which I have had since I came here, according to the custom of changing name and state. BROTHER JEROME.’

“*My Father’s Reply*

‘May 1866.

‘MY POOR DEAR BOY, over whom our hearts yearn notwithstanding all your wilfulness and waywardness and the world of trouble you have cost us. The Lord in His mercy look down on you and lift up the light of His countenance on you that in His light you may see light and see the darkness into which you have brought yourself by an evil course of disobedience to your parents and forgetfulness of God. The reason of my now writing to you is your letter to your brother under cover to Mr Murray which he kindly and considerately forwarded to me ; that letter I have not seen it right to forward to him, nor can I allow of any correspondence between you, so far as it lies in me to hinder it, and your brother, I think, will be obedient to what he knows to be my wish : this I told you at our last interview ; but till God is pleased to change your heart, I have no obedience to expect from you. There is indeed a great outward change in you as you describe yourself, but oh what is it all without the inward change ; “if any man be in Christ he is a new creature.” You may think that this prohibition to correspond with your brother is hard, but it is only the penalty which from the course you have pursued you have righteously incurred—as a parent I am bound to do what in me lieth to preserve my dear boy from



what I consider to be God-dishonouring and soul-destroying errors. You, with the subtlety of your system and the zeal of your natural character—a zeal which would equally manifest itself in any line of life—would seek by any means to get influence over his mind and so to draw him into your own net regardless of the consequence to your mother and myself; but I have confidence in my dear boy that he will be preserved from that snare of the fowler. It is enough that I should in my old age be dishonoured in one son, the Lord will keep us from further suffering in this way. You have made your election, you have preferred man's word to God's word; I have not since we met changed my mind one whit as to the evil of that system with which you have identified yourself, and you know that I have not formed my opinion from vulgar prejudice. I have read it in your own books, and from the *ipsisima verba* of your own Church I form my judgment. I desire not to go beyond the creed of Pope Pius, with the exception of the one article which your *semper eadem* Church has recently added to the faith. . . .

‘How your own letter manifests this, full of your own religious life: your vows and fasts, your mortifications and choirs and masses, but nothing of Jesus—that name above every name, that name uppermost in every true believer's heart, that name through which alone there is peace and pardon for any soul; in your six closely written pages there is no room for it, they are all taken up with your own doings, nothing of His doing. I care not to dwell on anything controversial with you, I doubt if it be the way which God honours, but the foregoing observations in truthfulness to God I thought that I should make. I have no hope regarding you from any source but the direct interference of God; you present to me the sad spectacle of one who has sold himself, and who lies bound hand and foot, incapable of any effort for your liberty; like

Israel of old, you have destroyed yourself, but there is hope with God. He is stronger than you and stronger than Satan, and I have hope in Him concerning you, and late and early you are borne on our hearts before Him that God will graciously deliver you and bring you into the glorious liberty of His children ; that He will give Jesus the place in your heart which you have given to the Church of Rome—my desire is not by any means that you should be simply brought out of Rome, but that you should be brought to Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit ; everything else will then follow in good time. I do indeed look on your community or its avowed principles as very antagonistic to the truth as it is in Jesus ; I doubt not at all that you may be associated with men of worth and integrity ; I war not with men but with error, dire error ; I would love the men, I hate the error that so gives the lie to God's word and contradicts the glorious life-giving, soul-saving work of Christ. I find in His precious blood once shed all that I need for the putting away of my sin. "He has by Himself purged our sins," is the expression of faith, then what more do I need ? I find in His intercourse all the help my soul needs, come boldly for grace to help, and I find in His coming again the one and only hope of the Church ; but whatever the need may be, the help is bound up in the name of Jesus, the only name under heaven given unto men whereby we may be saved—God's perfect remedy for all of sin and sorrow that befalls us down here—in Him is the peace and pardon, the full joy, not in anything of our own ; the Lord teach you this, for He only can. . . .

'We should be glad to know of your movements, but your religion is very hateful to us, as we believe it is to God, and your happiness and joy, which you speak of, is only sorrowful to us ; indeed sorrow is the effect of all your letters, the greatest we have known ; we have lost seven children—how dear they are to us, how dear

their memory still!—but you are a living blight upon our happiness from which we have relief alone from God; and then the ordeal which our letters must pass through and the uncertainty whether you ever may get them, or how far they may be mutilated, and the feeling that you must write for the eye of your superior, and that consequently we may be in entire ignorance of your real state and feeling, all this considerably interferes with the comfort of our correspondence; whether you may get this I know not, but I do know that no one has a right to come between parent and child, the strongest natural tie, and so strongly recognised in God's Word. But it has been too often the way of your Church, to subject the Word of God to its own authority.<sup>1</sup>

'I ought further to say that your mother had not thought of closing her correspondence with you till your letter assumed a tone which friends advised her not any longer to submit to. I did not at all interfere on the occasion, though when she decided I approved her decision. Now anything of the kind would not do for her. She is invalided for life with a heart complaint which dates from the scene at Pelham Villas, and which brought her to the brink of the grave.

'As to myself, I am well of the Lord's mercy; getting old, but still enabled to name the name of Jesus and finding it my joy and privilege to do so wherever a door is opened to me, and learning daily, I trust, somewhat of the riches of grace and glory that are folded in that gracious and adorable name—may your soul know it and be bowed before it; then, but not till then, can you be a doer of God's will.

'Farewell, my dear boy. You have your mother's

<sup>1</sup> "But what of Matthew x. 35-37 and Luke xiv. 26? 'I am come to set a man at variance against his father.' 'He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother he cannot be My disciple.'

love and mine, much as you have grieved us. The Lord bless you and draw your heart to Himself, and keep you.

‘The time, I believe, is short ; the coming of the Lord, I believe, draweth nigh. May you be found ready when the trumpet sounds.—Your ever affectionate father.’

“It is curious to note this devotion to ‘the adorable name of Jesus’ with which Catholics would have been in entire sympathy. The name is never mentioned among them without some sign of worship being paid to it, and on the second Sunday after Epiphany the Feast of the Most Holy Name is celebrated throughout the world.

“‘O Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord,  
 Forgive me if I say  
 For very love Thy sweetest name  
 A thousand times a day.’

It is a hymn of Father Faber’s which I first heard sung at one of my clandestine visits to the London Oratory, and which I loved to repeat in prayer.

“Long ago I read in the Annals of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith of a devout Japanese woman in the days of persecution who used to repeat the name of Buddha a thousand times a day. She was converted by a Catholic missionary and then continued the practice, only substituting the name of Jesus. This was recorded to the honour of her piety, but what was the difference between her former and later practice ?

“When I first made acquaintance with the *Imitation of Christ* in my High Church period, I read to my mother the first chapter, thinking she could not but be pleased with it and would be brought to admit there might be something good even in Roman Catholic books of devotion. I was disappointed. Her remark when I ended was, ‘Oh my

boy, there's nothing in it of Jesus. It's only His name I want to hear.' I might have answered that in Paul's inspired Hymn of Love (1 Corinthians xiii.) the name of Jesus is neither implied nor expressed, whereas it does occur once in the chapter of à Kempis I read, and as 'Christ' or by a pronoun ten times, and that it is with His words, 'He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness,' that it begins. But it would have been of no use to argue the point. Even among Unitarians in the early days of my ministry, when more orthodox views prevailed, I have heard the criticism made 'that in the whole service the name of Jesus was not once mentioned,' and that though the text was taken from His discourses.

"To the last letter of my father's I replied as follows:—

'MY VERY DEAR FATHER,—May the Lord Jesus whose only is all holiness, authority, dignity, *solus sanctus, solus Dominus, solus altissimus*, lift upon you the light of His countenance and bless you! . . .

'I turn to your letter, which is lying before me, to guide me in answering it; and again, as every time that I have read it, the tears come to my eyes and sorrow and bewilderment to my soul. It is not as if I had to defend a society of men and human opinions; the cause of the Church is that of the Holy Ghost, who inhabits it and works and speaks within it and through it; it is the cause of the Lord God who has espoused it, and shall I undertake to plead it?

'It was a great and very unexpected pleasure to have a letter from you, and so kind a one, after a silence which I did not think would ever be broken; but there are lines which it would require pages to answer, and yet I know not how to leave them unnoticed, and there are expressions which gave me continual pain for many days.

'I refer especially to those which speak of the

Church in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. I feel so acutely the enormity of the crime of which you accuse her and the utter falseness of the accusation. My dear father, I solemnly protest to you before God that you do not understand the doctrine of the Church. How could you do so from the bare dogmatic enunciation of the Creeds? You might as well think from a distant inspection of the walls and fortifications of a city to judge of its population and their condition, and cry aloud to them that they had no food nor money nor soldiers. It is hard to prove the contrary; you must yourself come and see, but even then it would not be enough.

‘The charge most commonly brought against the Church is that of which almost all the letters I have received from you speak, and which I remember at Oscott to have read in your “reasons,” namely, that we substitute something for Jesus and the Atonement—be it the Church or Mass or the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, or works of penance and chants and prayer. I most utterly deny it. These are to Christ what the fruit is to the tree, the river to the fountain, the road to the city whither it leads, the work to the artist. Apart from Him they are nothing, or folly. In Him they are all divine. . . . As to Holy Mass, it is only ignorance of our Faith which can make it seem derogatory to the one all-sufficient Sacrifice of Calvary. It is not because of the imperfection but from the infinite perfection of the sacrifice of Christ that the Mass has its worth. I wonder how you could speak of it as “a petty sacrifice.” If the Catholic doctrine be true, then it is a sacrifice greater and more acceptable to God than all the works and prayers and sacrifices of all saints and angels taken together. If it be false, it is not petty but nothing at all, a mere mummery. In either case its intention is not to hide but to manifest Jesus, not to diminish the one sacrifice but to extol its magnificence and boundless range extending to all

places and to the end of time, an ever-flowing fount of grace.

‘As to Transubstantiation, I will only say that it is possible with Him who created all things to change one substance into another ; that He actually does so. His own words, taken in the plain obvious sense, sufficiently testify. When Christ says, “This is My body,” I see great difficulties in believing that He meant only “This is a sign or symbol of My body,” and none at all in believing that He meant just what the words imply, and that He used them in the sense which He foresaw that millions for ages to come would accept them, exercising a simple faith in His power and goodness. What matters it to me that I don’t understand how, when the “How” of so many works of nature is a mystery to me ? After all, it is not more difficult to believe (as a Unitarian journal in the time of the last “No Popery” riots rightly remarked) than to believe that a man, obscure, persecuted, subject to weariness and hunger and thirst, hiding himself from his enemies, bound, scourged, mocked, crucified—that such a one was verily the Eternal Son of God, Himself God, Creator and Preserver of all things, Immortal, Omnipotent. And this I, who a while ago smiled at your simplicity in accepting, in so easily accepting, the Gospels and the Faith of Christ, so believe that I would count it the highest joy, the sublimest honour, to shed my blood in attestation of it. Not that of myself I am capable of this, but “our sufficiency is of God who worketh in us to will and to do.”<sup>1</sup> If I were to quote according to my inclination, I should copy the greater part of the wonderful Epistle to the Ephesians, which of all the books of the Bible I have perhaps most read and studied since I became a Catholic. So many passages are there in it written as it were expressly for me.

<sup>1</sup> “The words are from 2 Corinthians iii. 5, but I seem to have been thinking of them as from Ephesians.

‘Ah, dearest father, it is very strange that “an evil course of disobedience and forgetfulness of God” should have brought about such a result as to make me what I now am. Five years ago, in my vain infidelity, I thought the doctrine of the Atonement and of Eternal Punishment contrary to reason and justice, revelation uncertain, the future life a strange and interesting problem which death would solve—death to which I looked forward with curiosity rather than fear, which I often thought to anticipate by my own act. By a wondrous and extraordinary mercy of God, when I returned to Cambridge in October 1861, I began to doubt if my presumption was just, and gradually to submit myself as a little child to the Word of God. I even defended it with jealousy against the attacks of some whom I once thought too scrupulous and reverential. It was a great step, but not far enough. When I had made it, I saw that there was yet more wanting. I had the Word of God, but I wanted to be sure of the interpretation. I could not follow man, because even with the best intentions men err, and lead others into error, and I saw those for whom I had the deepest reverence, both among the living and the dead, widely differing among themselves. Besides, it was not the guidance of man, but the guidance of God I needed, and that not a mere internal guidance of which I could not be sure, trusting to which thousands had gone far astray from the truth, scattered in all directions, led really by a fervent imagination which they believed to be a divine inspiration, an error, too, this, into which my mental constitution made me very apt to fall. And then, after a gleam of light, the darkness seemed again to close around me, and in an extreme of misery, of sin, of blindness, hating the past, dreading the future, despairing, except through the special interference of God to break the chains in which I lay bound, to repair a life already ruined, I raised a cry of agony



to Him who is "mighty to save." And He through whose grace I had recognised my misery did not leave me helpless. I saw in Holy Scripture, with a clearness which since that time has ever increased, that God Himself had provided beforehand for my needs. That Christ had founded a Church with which He promised to remain, to which He gave the Holy Spirit of Truth, and commission to teach all nations, a Church one, catholic, infallible, and therefore also professing itself infallible. To know, then, which was that Church was no difficulty. All others taught as men, liable to err and to deceive. They were not the teachers for me, whom God had reduced to the state of a little child longing only to be taught the truth as it is in Jesus, and to believe. But when I had by myself become convinced that the Roman Church was the Church of Christ (a conclusion to which neither then nor now do I see any other alternative except that the Bible be false and the promise of Christ has failed, and that if God has made a revelation, His Providence has failed to provide for its manifestation and preservation), I turned away in horror from the light I had received. And then began the fiercest struggle of my life, Satan and nature against God. You may not believe me, but I know that, notwithstanding all my waywardness and disrespect, I loved you and my dear mother with a very deep love, and the thought of the pain I should cause you was agonising to me. A month before I became a Catholic, I told a friend openly that my only reason for not joining the Church was the grief it would cause to my parents. I never spoke to you about it, because I knew by experience how useless and how painful it would be. Convinced as I was that if Christianity was true, it was Roman Christianity, in my vile cowardice I thought to withdraw again into infidelity. I murmured inwardly that God would give to me a light which He did not give to others, and call me in consequence to so dreaded

a sacrifice. I imagined that if I became a Catholic, I should be miserable for the rest of my life, and never laugh again. By all possible reasonings and devices I sought to shun God ; but, as you say, He is mightier than Satan and mightier than me, and He prevailed on the morning of the 23rd July 1862. I was resolved to leave immediately the Oratory to which I had come the evening before, and, to justify myself, I argued against the possibility of my believing in hell, and, as I argued, confirmed myself in pride and unbelief—a few hours after, by an almost miraculous invoking of the grace of God, without any argument or persuasion of man, I said, in all humble faith, “ Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.” Since that moment I have lived in freedom and light. Old doubts have scarce ever troubled me, and if occasionally circumstances have revived them, God has given me strength to resist them. Habits of sin that I despaired of getting rid fell off from me without even that I had to combat them ; I began to believe and hope and love, and rejoice amid all contradiction and trial in the hope of that inheritance, “ incorruptible and undefiled,” which the adoption of God through the Precious Blood of Jesus gave me the right to expect. I have not indeed reaped the fruits of what I have sown ; but I inherit of Him, “ Who, not knowing sin, was made sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” If such be the work of the devil, verily his kingdom is divided against itself ; if of nature, the dead ought to be able to raise themselves to life, for it would be a less miracle than to work the change that has taken place in me. So, since I am so great a debtor to the Precious Blood of Jesus, without which I should be now in hell, or drawing ever nearer to it, through which I have received light and life and health and freedom, and all things in this life, and look forward to life eternal in the unveiled vision of His countenance, it was a very

great pain to me to be so accused of slighting Him for whom I hope that I would gladly die.

‘Let me copy from your letter words to which I and every Catholic must most heartily consent, and they express what I feel better than I could do it myself: “Whatever the need may be, the help is bound up in the name of Jesus—the only name under heaven given unto men whereby we may be saved.” “God’s perfect remedy for the all of sin and sorrow that befalls us down here—in Him is the peace and pardon, the full joy, not in anything of our own.” I would add that He is the one inexhaustible fount of all holiness and glory and dignity, which He poured forth first in boundless measure upon His own most Blessed Mother. The chief work of His wisdom and His love, whom we delight to honour, because the praise of the statue is but one with the praise of the sculptor, the praise of the Mother flows forth from and returns upon the Son, and then upon all His saints whose works are holy and meritorious only so far as He co-operates in them. It is strange that the intercession of living men to God for us, you willingly admit; and to ask the intercession of those who have passed from this life in the peace of God, you call dishonouring to Him who is their Saviour and ours. But enough for the present.

‘I hope very much from the loving tone of your letter that you will not let it be the first and last, that you will hear what I have to say when I am so heavily accused. I agree with you most cordially in the dislike of controversy: what I seek is only to expound the faith of the Church, and I only ask of you to receive my letters as the simple honest manifestation of my thoughts, as written in the sight of God, without equivocation. I write always without asking or receiving advice of anyone, and I express myself to you without being in the least influenced by the fact that my letter will be afterwards read by one

who has all my confidence, to whom I willingly expose my every thought, temptation or disquietude. Even if I had no obligation to show the letter to others, I should certainly ask to do so, lest I might carelessly or ignorantly assert to you something false or doubtful.

‘One point more, and I have done. It seems presumptuous in me, young, unlearned, inexperienced, so to freely oppose and condemn you. I admit it willingly, were it on my own authority I did so ; but the authority of the Church, were it even a human society, would well justify me in opposing any individual, whatever might be his claims to be revered. But the Church is not human, and its voice, which I only usurp when I oppose you, is the voice of Christ. Otherwise I am well conscious that my reverence towards you has not diminished, but deepened and increased ; my very dreams manifest it to me, from the love and respect which I felt towards you when I thought you had come to see me. It is sad what you say of my darling mother ; but it is not a new story, but an oft-repeated one, and prophesied by Christ Himself (Matt. x. 34-35)—a prophecy curiously enough verified continually among Catholics, even where there is no difference of religion, on account of the difference of life to which God calls His own.

‘With all love and longing desire for true union in the faith and love of Jesus.—Your own loving son,  
 ‘FRA GIROLAMO.’

“It was a long letter, and I don’t think my father could have brought himself to do more than look through it. Numerous Latin quotations which I made from St Augustine, St Thomas Aquinas, and the Council of Trent, to prove that what I alleged was the real doctrine of the Church were thrown away upon him. A man of seventy

who has not read Latin since he took his degree cannot readily translate it, and he doubtless, and rightly, would not have thought it worth his while to set to work to learn from his son how he had all his life misunderstood and misrepresented the Church of Rome. He was not open to conviction, and how is it possible that a man can be, in respect of beliefs which he had held and taught from youth to old age and trusted in and proved their power ?

## CHAPTER XI

### THE INNER LIFE OF THE CELL

“OUR convent, though dating back to the days of St Dominic, whose cell was set apart as a chapel, was of recent date as to its personnel. A few years before my time Pope Pius IX, desirous of restoring the religious orders to strict discipline and observance of their respective rules, had appointed a French friar to be General of the Order, and it was arranged to make Santa Sabina a model community whose example would, it was hoped, be effective to the reform of the great convent of the Minerva at Rome, and of the other like communities throughout the world. It followed that our life was much harder than it would have been elsewhere, and that it was for the most part only younger men who essayed it. We were about forty in number, divided into four classes, who were kept apart except when assembled for our scanty meals, when all sat together in the order of dignity or seniority, and had the same quantity and quality of food distributed to everyone. The Lay Brothers did the general work of the convent, laundry, tailoring, cooking, etc., and had their own spiritual exercises and their Master, appointed from among the Fathers. The Simple Novices, whose corridor was locked off from that of the Professed Novices, which was again locked from all intrusion from outside. And the Fathers, who had a larger liberty but were under the supervision of the Prior, whose cell was like their own and in their

midst. They might not go outside the convent without his leave, but could choose their books from the library of theological works, and go into the church when they were so inclined.

“Between these classes no conversation was allowed except on occasion of high festivals for an hour after dinner. This was specially hard upon me in my first year, for the only other English friar was a Professed Novice, and only half a dozen times could I have a talk with him. But conversation at all times was within strict limits, and might never be on ‘worldly’ matters. We were never allowed to speak of our past life in the world, and I knew no more of those who were my companions day and night for years than that they came, one from Poland, another from China, others from Southern Italy, Tuscany and Piedmont, some from France, England, Ireland, Germany. For the convent belonged not to a Province, but to the General of the whole Order, who placed in it such as in his travels he found more willing and eager, or it might be, more necessitous and unable to pay the pittance which their own Province was obliged to demand to pay the cost of their maintenance during their years of noviciate.

“So much of our brothers we could not help knowing, but of what they had been of better or worse before they became ‘religious’ we knew nothing. Our Chinaman was a priest and came from Portugal, but how he got there we never sought to learn. Indeed, in his case, any inquiry would have been as futile as in our belief sinful, for he was a man who had no language of his own. Chinese he seemed to have forgotten, for when a countryman was brought to be introduced to him he told us that he could not understand him or make himself understood. Portuguese he had learnt little of, and almost forgotten, and he could only communicate with us by stuttering in

Latin. He disappeared after a while, and what became of him we were not told.

“Of the German I have told the story already. He spoke English perfectly, and I was as intimate with him as it was permitted for one novice to be with another ; but he never talked to me of his past life, and he certainly would have reproved me and made me ashamed of myself if I had asked him about it. Once only an allusion to old habits escaped him. He noticed that my nails were somewhat long, and expressed surprise that I could demean myself by allowing them to grow. I was puzzled, for it had never occurred to me that nails had anything to do with religion, and if mine were too long just then it was a mere accident. But he explained that ‘in the world’ gentlemen proved their standing by their nails. Long nails were evidence of hands not engaged at any time in hard work, and as such were carefully tended. I had heard of this practice in China, but I stoutly maintained that no such significance attached to nails in England. I don’t know whether I was altogether right. Certainly I have not myself ever been in the society of men who would be ashamed of its appearing that they sometimes worked hard with their hands. But I have never been in the society of Prussian Junkers.

“Others of our company, I imagine, came from a quite humble class of life and knew nothing of letters beyond their school Latin. But considerations of the kind did not occur to us. We were all sons of one family, equally noble, equally poor, wearing the same clothes, sharing the same scanty meals, subject to the same rule, cherishing the same ideals.

“But, despite the very democratic constitution of the Friar Preachers, we were divided first by the priesthood, and then by position in the Order. So our good Prior, when



announced in the weekly order of service to officiate on some important festival at High Mass, became 'Admodum Reverendus Pater, Frater Vincentius Acquaroni, Socius Reverendissimi Patris Generalis, Lector Sacrae Theologiae, necnon hujus venerabilis Conventus Sanctae Sabinae Prior.' It gratified the humblest of us, for we felt that we shared the resounding titles of our chief, and it harmed none of us to be reminded of our comparative insignificance.

"During the year of probation or simple noviciate all studies are prohibited, and the whole time of the novices is taken up in preparation for the new life to which they desire to commit themselves. They are exercised in discipline and prayer, are taught the Rule of the Order, and learn all that will be required of them from least to greatest. These instructions are conveyed in catechetical form, taken down in writing and committed to memory, and I have them before me as I wrote them fifty years ago.

"The first question is, 'What is the religious estate?'<sup>1</sup> It would be impossible to exaggerate the immense importance of this to the individual who proposes to bind himself by perpetual vow to the life of religion. All that he has, mind, soul, body, rights, and belongings, he surrenders without reserve and till death.

"For what? To what purpose?"

"The answer is, 'It is a kind of discipline or exercise for the attainment of perfection, and this religious, always with great desire and with all their might, are bound to further, so that at no times may they lay aside the sincere purpose of striving, studying, continuing to attain the goal of perfection without mortal sin.' 'The religious binds

<sup>1</sup> "*Status religiosus*. Status is the sort or condition of a man, servile or free, lay or clerical. So Shakespeare: 'When I came to man's estate,' *i.e.* the condition of manhood, or my majority. 'Condescend to men of low estate,' (Romans xii. 16). So here: 'What is it that distinguishes the "religious" from other men?'

himself to perpetual servitude,' says Aquinas; and again, 'He dedicates himself to divine service as a whole burnt-offering.' And so he decides that obedience is of the three vows the most worthy, because thereby the will itself is given up, which is of more worth than body or goods.<sup>1</sup>

"So much is clear and agreed upon. 'Religion' is a way of reaching perfection. But in what perfection consists is more difficult to define, and instruction on this point none was given us, nor, indeed, question regarding it asked by us. 'Perfection, that is to say, of charity,' was the only explanation of this supremely important phrase, and by itself it explains nothing. To the question, 'In what does perfection consist?' I presume the rationalist would answer, 'The perfection of each individual consists in the full development of all his powers and capacities, so that in health and strength and activity, in skill and understanding, in thought and speech, in self-control and relation to other men, he should be his best possible. Try as he will, the ordinary man cannot attain to be a Faraday or a Gladstone, a Newman or a Martineau, or to eminence in any kind or degree. He can be his own best. And to enable him to attain this, to start him on the way of this perfection, is the purpose of education,—to keep the way open to him and attractive, the supreme duty of Church and State.'

"But this is very far from the ideal of perfection as taught in 'Religion.' I doubt if I myself, in my nine years of monastery life, ever realised to the full that the goal to which I was bent was absolute and entire renunciation of all that I was. '*Per tria vota fit holocaustum,*' says St Thomas. The three vows act as a fire which completely consumes the sacrifice; when it has done its work all individuality is destroyed. The religious has no

<sup>1</sup> "St Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, 2, pp. 184, 186.

will of his own, opinion of his own. He cannot dispose of his own body. He himself belongs to 'religion.' This is the ideal which all are bound to strive towards, which will be attained only by the rare souls who become the saints of the Church.

"And what is the way which all alike must follow who have devoted their lives to the pursuit of this far-off perfection? 'By what means,' it is the second question, 'ought the religious to seek perfection?' The answer is, 'First, by exact observance of the three vows. Secondly, by the practice of the virtues, especially by diligence in prayer, mortification of the senses, and restraint of the passions. Thirdly, by observance of the Rule and Constitution of the Order to which they belong.' Very simple it seems. Extraordinarily difficult it is, and all kinds of devices have to be resorted to as the strategy and tactics and armaments of this terrible and lifelong war with one's own self.

"The first condition of success, we were taught, was to engage heaven on our side by prayer in choir, where we spent between three and four hours every day, no exemption being ever allowed except for illness; prayer in the solitude of our own cells into which none might enter but the Master of Novices; prayer on our knees whenever we left our own silent cloister, commending ourselves to the protection of the Blessed Virgin and St Dominic; prayer at every waking hour of day and night, from the time that, long before sunrise, we were roused from sleep by a knocking at the door and responded '*Deo gratias*' to the call from without, '*Benedicamus Domino*'; and I for one straightway knelt beside my rush-leaf pallet and humbly and gratefully kissed the ground where kept watch the Guardian Angel who never left my side. For we thought of ourselves as living in two worlds—the seen, which was of

little consequence except as the field of the battle ; and the unseen, whose hosts, good and evil, strove one with another for the dominion of our souls. The Infinite Majesty of God was round about and within us ; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, One in Three, were realities more certain than our brethren of the convent, who possibly might be only our dreams or delusions. And if we shrunk in His presence and shrivelled in the flame of His holiness, so that we knew ourselves unclean and less than nothing before Him, was not the universe peopled with creatures, finite even as ourselves and sensitive to our piteous appeal for intercession ? On her throne in Heaven sat one of our own flesh and blood, the blessed mother of the Saviour God ; from far away she heard the whispered prayer, the litanies of her suppliants, and through her, for her sake, and at her entreaties, God showered graces on undeserving mortals. And round about the throne of the Most High, stood the seven who never failed their praise of Him who sat thereon, yet were alive to the call of their poor fellow-worshippers warring on earth ; and other myriad angels, each one distinguished from all his fellows by being himself alone a 'species,' a distinct angelic nature. Then there was the multitude of saints, who had been men like ourselves, who had been tempted like as we were, who had suffered and even sinned as we did, who knew us so well—how hard we tried, how badly we failed. Some of them were our near relations : St Dominic, our father, whose habit we wore and by whose rule we lived ; St Thomas, greatest of theologians, of whose doctrine we were the custodians and the interpreters ; St Catherine of Siena, a woman great in her time among the world rulers, great now among saints. These and the hundreds of Dominicans still remembered for their learning and holiness and the tens of thousands unknown to fame who had won the crown of life, and the black robe

cast aside for ever, stood now in shining white among the throngs who praise God above.

“‘Compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses,’ how should we fail to ‘pray without ceasing,’ not always asking even for things the most necessary to our spiritual life, but seeking communion with these blessed spirits, to keep as it were in touch with them, and lifting up our hearts continually to Him who is their God and ours ?

“And more than all saints and angels, infinitely more than even the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of God, was the presence in our midst of Jesus, God and Man, in ‘The Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.’ There in the veiled tabernacle, ‘in another form’ than that He wore on earth yet the same person, not a spirit but ‘He Himself, flesh and bones’ such as ours. ‘Perfect God and perfect man’ as the Creed assured us, there day and night He was dwelling, and every morning renewing in the Mass the sacrifice of Calvary.

“The glorious ten years’ vision has faded long ago, ‘melted into thin air,’ and, looking back upon those days, I wonder how it came about that ‘this insubstantial pageant,’ so real to us, assured of it as of our own being, albeit ‘most ignorant of what we were most assured,’ should have had so little effect.

“But prayer alone, breviary and rosary and meditation and all the many contrivances to make it more effective by the variety of persons addressed and of the forms of address, has from of old proved insufficient to advancement in the way of perfection. I find in my private notes of this time a saying of the great modern saint, Alphonso da Liguori : ‘Prayer without mortification is either illusion or does not last long,’ to which I have appended of my own the remark, ‘Certainly it will be also true that mortification without prayer is useless or hurtful.’ So we were exhorted con-

tinually to mortify ourselves always and in everything—in eating and drinking, in speaking and reading, above all in thinking and willing. So far as our outward life was concerned, we were obliged all of us, to keep the strict rules of the Order. Indulgence of the appetite and bodily comfort were as much out of our reach as an easy-chair and champagne and cigars are beyond the reach of the poor. Even pleasure of the most innocent kind was rarely allowed us. I can recall under this head only long walks round the walls or into the Campagna, when discipline was relaxed for a while and we did not walk two and two in file with eyes fixed on the ground. But this happened only two or three times in the year. I should add the comparative jollity of two or three hours on days of high festival, Christmas, Easter, St Dominic's, and the patron saints of our ancient Church, when we had what was, compared to ordinary fare, a sumptuous midday meal and a glass of good wine, and might even be allowed to talk as we sat at table and afterwards mixed together freely, fathers and novices, in the garden till the bell rang, when on the instant silence and discipline resumed their sway.

“But somehow men adapt themselves to their environment so that they can settle down and make themselves fairly comfortable in mind and body under the most unfavourable circumstances. A monk may observe the Rule of his Order, may fast and pray and surrender his will till it gets impotent by disuse, he may scourge himself with knotted cords at the stated times for such exercise, and do all required of him, and yet fail of the strict obligation he has laid upon himself. To accept the routine of conventual life and settle down to conformity may be to live in mortal sin. There must needs dwell in the peace he has acquired a certain holy discontent. He must, if he would be true to his vows, be moving on, ‘stretching forward to the things

which are before,'<sup>1</sup> always with all his might pressing on to the perfection which he has promised God to try for. This is the supreme difficulty of the religious life, and few they are who succeed in overcoming it. In the fragments of memoranda which have survived half a century of revolutionary spiritual change, I find myself continually beginning anew and invariably falling back. I tried one way after another to break through the round of good habit and rise to something better, winged my way upward on holy resolution, and presently found myself on the old level. I made all manner of resolutions and strengthened them with the buttresses of many devices, but devices and resolutions presently failed.

“Bits of diary record, not my daily doings nor my feelings, but my oftentimes breach of some rule or practice I had purposed to follow. One of these new beginnings is dated October 2, 1866, Feast of the Holy Guardian Angels. It begins with the terms of resolution made two days before :—

““This day, the feast of my holy patron, St Jerome, I finish the third year of my noviciate, and now despairing of myself after so many attempts and so many failures, I cast myself into the most merciful arms of Jesus, and resolve once more to begin in a new way, a way hitherto untried by me—that of the love and imitation of Jesus, and hence necessarily the way of Holy Cross. Wherefore I desire henceforth, taking *the love of Jesus for my motive, the contemplation of Jesus for my guide*, and seeing that the love and knowledge of Him are to be had only from above, from “the Father of lights,” *prayer in all times and places* (but above all in the times specially appointed thereto) for help and strength and perseverance, to enter on the Royal Way of the Cross, “always and every hour, in small things

<sup>1</sup> “Philippians, iii. 13.

as in great," *mortifying my proud and sensual dispositions* : endeavouring especially to unite myself with Our Lord in His hidden life (His life corresponding to my age and to my humble condition as a novice), with Him trying *to live in obscurity*, and to avoid the notice of others, even as I have hitherto sought it, and *to subject myself to all* even as He was subject to His own creatures.'

"There follow two prayers, for though Catholics never use privately composed prayers in public worship, it is free to them to pour out their hearts in their own way by themselves, and, indeed, this is an essential part of meditation so strongly insisted upon as indispensable to a good and holy life :—

"I. 'Lord Jesus, it is my desire to follow Thee constantly in obscurity, poverty, submission and suffering even unto death ; and Thou hast said, "No man can come unto Me except the Father who sent Me draw him." Therefore, I cry to Thee, "Draw me and I will run after Thee." "Lifted up from the earth, draw me, Lord, to Thee, to Thy Cross, for this is the way, as Thou hast said," narrow, and to flesh and blood exceeding difficult and hateful. Lord, long and often have I proved my weakness and changeableness. Many a time have I begun to do well, and speedily have I failed and returned to my old self-pleasing, self-seeking ways, and Thou in Thy fond mercy hast made difficult and thorny my perverse path, and now I have left but one way, Lord, my God ; and with longing eyes I regard it, and it is exceeding steep, and I tremble for myself. O strong Helper, help me ! Without Thee I am nothing, in Thee I can do all things. Grant me that, bearing my cross, I may follow Thee, that Thou mayst be to me my only delight, only hope and sweetness—Thou who art all good, whole good, only good, beside whom there is no good.'



“2. Follows to the Blessed Virgin :—

“‘Most Holy Mother of God, Virgin Immaculate, Refuge of sinners, Help of Christians, I commend myself to thee, and take thee for my own mother, my refuge in all trouble and temptation. I desire to consider all that is in my hands as thine, and to ask thy leave to use each thing, and before taking anything newly given me to offer it first to thee, and to thank thee for thy bounty. Moreover, as a special mark of filial subjection, I resolve never to leave thy room (that in which I live) without telling thee for what I am going out and asking thy blessing.’

“But if all this failed us, there was ever urgent as a goad, pricking us on when susceptibility to higher motives tired, fear—fear the ghastliest conceivable. Our aspiration was for the Vision of God and the Communion of the Saints, and a bliss secure and eternal which it has not entered into the heart of man to conceive. But the dread possibility was present up to the last moment of life that our lot would be the outer darkness, the company of devils, and such physical torments as earth’s fire and judicial torture are but suggestions of. So far we were called, we were chosen of God ; but to ‘make our calling and election sure,’ terror was invoked, even while hope was insisted on as a virtue essential to salvation.

“As a matter of fact, the thought of hell did not oppress us. We believed in it with all the strength of conviction with which we believed in God and the Church. When we entered upon our annual eight days of retreat, it was the subject of the first day’s meditation in order to frighten us into a yet more solemn view of life than was customary to us. But the impression was not very deep or lasting, and when we closed the retreat with meditation on the joys of heaven, it was well-nigh effaced.

“It is to the credit of human nature that men are not

to be made good by fear ; the most horrible penalties here do not deter them from crime, and threats of unimaginable punishment hereafter do not avail to make them saints. Indeed, speaking for myself, I doubt whether the fear of hell had any real influence on my life from the beginning to the end of the ten years that I was a believer. It did not quicken my entry into the Church, and it did not make me slower when I was minded to leave it. But there it was, a dread reality, all my convent days.

““Striving, studying, contriving to attain perfection,—that was our business. . . .”

## PART II.—BIOGRAPHICAL

### CHAPTER I

#### THE EARLY YEARS REVIEWED

THE task of completing the story of a long life begun as an autobiography, but suddenly broken off at an early stage, and without indications of further plan, has a difficult beginning. Some breach of continuity in passing from the inner to the outer point of view can hardly be avoided.

In order to reduce this breach as far as possible, it is necessary, in the reader's interest as well as in my own, that we should retrace our steps. I must secure a starting-point and gather up the strands which I have to weave into the sequel. In this way the reader will, to some extent, be spared the jar in passing from the one point of view to the other.

This procedure is the more necessary because, since Hargrove laid down his pen, much new material has come to light. Some of it, indeed, he had collected himself with a view to inserting a part of it on revising his autobiography. This applies both to his early training among the Plymouth Brethren, and to his subsequent conversion to the Church of Rome. A greater change has yet to follow, and as this, in my opinion, had its roots in what went before, I feel bound to give my own version of the process that led up to it. I shall do so briefly, in two chapters, with the aid of the new material I have mentioned.

Hargrove's narrative presents features which will be familiar to many whose memories go back to the mid-Victorian period. We are introduced to a circle of strict Dissenters, profoundly in earnest about their religion—a religion which has a clear-cut theological form, confirmed by inward experience, and with a copious terminology of its own which enters freely into daily conversation and into family letters. The atmosphere is highly charged with theology and religion, and the leading phrases of both are incessantly repeated. The father is a notable minister of the Gospel: his vocation is prayer, preaching, and the study of the Word; there is abundant piety and fervour, and the whole family life is saturated with their influence.

Parental discipline was in general much stricter than now, and it was among Dissenters of the type described by Hargrove that it assumed the most exacting forms. It was characteristic of their piety to bring the affairs of daily life, down to the minutest, "before the Lord," especially those which concerned the upbringing of their children—a state of things which made childhood portentous and terrible. "Visited my old home at 7 Ordnance Road," writes Hargrove in 1875, "and saw 'papa's and mamma's room,' where many a night I was whipped before going to sleep." These whippings would be brought "before the Lord," both before and after they were inflicted.

Children being regarded as in imminent danger of going wrong both temporally and spiritually, "the Lord's aid" was sought incessantly to check their backslidings and to correct their waywardness. The families these good people brought into the world were frequently large, in which particular they supported themselves by texts from the Bible; though it is difficult to understand how they could face the responsibility of exposing new souls to the risks of eternal

damnation, which they believed to be imminent on every side. As the children grew up responsibility for their spiritual state weighed heavily on the elders, increasing the burdens of the parent almost as much as it added to the terrors of the child. It was of course the mother for whom the poignancy of these fears was chiefly reserved. Believing herself converted, she would look round upon her babes, revolving the dreadful possibilities of the future state, and wondering how many had the mark of the elect on their foreheads ; and often, in consequence of some trifling offence committed by this one or that, her heart would sink within her, she would become a victim to dark misgivings and would spend many hours in agonising prayer.

My own childhood was passed under conditions not dissimilar to those which Hargrove has described, and I can well remember how one member of the family, a high-spirited boy, became a focus for all the religious anxieties of the household, having earned the reputation of a heart impervious to "grace" by his persistence in teasing a cat. From absurd trifles of this kind the most unhappy consequences sometimes followed. When the family was large there was generally one of the children, perhaps the most intelligent and active, on whom the religious apprehensions of the elders were specially concentrated for reasons not always easy to discern. He would be compared unfavourably with the others and sometimes spoken of openly as a reprobate ; he would be mentioned by name in the family devotions as deserving the wrath of God, while his person, perhaps, was still smarting from a recent administration of the cane ; sinister characteristics would be ascribed to him ; gradually he would drift apart from his brothers and sisters, while they on their side would develop a priggishness in his presence of which mutual hatred was the inevitable fruit. In the case of Hargrove the process was arrested short of

the worst by the workings of a nature too affectionate to be easily embittered ; but there is clear evidence in the documents of the time that he lived in an atmosphere of admonition and chiding ; that he suffered by contrast with his younger brother Joseph, who, though unequal to him in intellect, had the advantage of him in "grace" ; that he was regarded by his parents as unstable and flighty, and therefore in peculiar peril from the wiles of Satan ; and that his father, thinking to guard against these dangers, and believing that he was doing his son the highest conceivable service, kept the face of the poor boy tightly pressed on the grindstone of a cruel theology. I do not mean by this that the parents had no natural affection for him. They had it in abundance, and it was returned. But natural affection when joined to a theological prepossession is apt to produce an obliquity of moral vision the effects of which may be disastrous. It is a condition under which human beings cannot understand one another and love becomes blind. Thus it was that the elder Hargrove's affection for his son took the form of demanding the early manifestation of "the signs of grace," and these not appearing as soon as they were expected, the boy fell under suspicion and was treated as a rebel *in posse*. Was this prevision ? If so, it was the kind of prevision that hastens the event it foresees.

Here is an undated letter written by the father to the boy at school, which illustrates what I have said. The boy had evidently made confession of some fault. There is no reason to think that it was very grave.

"DEAR CHARLES,—It would be vain to say that I was not displeased and grieved at heart at what you have done. With your eyes open you did what you knew was wrong in God's sight—what you knew would wound your Mother and me to the heart, and what was ungrateful to Mr Murray to whom you owe

so much, and all through the fear of displeasing a set of fellows who would spit in your face five minutes after. Would France, with less light than you have, have acted so? And all to honour one who had been so short a time at school with you and was flushed in his conversation. What injustice was it to your fellows! How you might steadily and quietly have witnessed to them, in a way that might tell on them in years hence. Now you are but one of them in evil.

“I am grieved at heart for you. This vacillancy of character augurs ill in a world so full of temptation. May God have mercy on you and strengthen you to stand against evil. May He forgive you. I do.—  
Ever your very affectionate  
C. H.”

This was using a sledge-hammer to crack a nut, and it is characteristic of the father's way throughout. To the sensitive and brooding nature of the boy, walking tremulously in a world which he had been taught to believe was full of pitfalls, the wound must have been deep enough already, and these fresh exacerbations might well have been dispensed with. It was balm that was needed, and this can hardly have been provided by the autocratic “I do” at the end.

The following letters reveal the effect of all this on the boy. The first two are undated, but were evidently written soon after his going to boarding school.

*To his Mother*

“MOST DARLING, DARLING,—. . . I am very unhappy because I have nothing to hope for. Because over every pleasure I have yet had I might write the words—whosoever drinketh of this well shall thirst again. I hope I shall see Pa soon. I hope Josie will repent of his conduct yesterday, as I cannot still help thinking of it. Most darling, darling I must conclude.”

*To his Sister*

“DEAREST SISTER,—. . . The few lines you wrote were very suitable to my case you say that you hope I agree with my schoolfellows better than you do with yours you must agree very badly with them if you agree worse than I do. I have no religious companions they laugh at me and call me a Methodist if I speak of religion but I think myself happy in this for it is for the name of Jesus, for Jesus [*sic*] ‘who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son’ to me, me the vilest of sinners I send you a beautiful letter of darling papa’s . . . when do the holidays begin ours begin on the 15th how happy we will be. I have got a cough.—Your most affectionate brother

“CHARLIE.”

*To his Father*

“WIMBLEDON,  
“August 27, 1853.

“MOST DARLING PA,—. . . I am not happy, never was truly happy and I want to be happy, I want to know Christ as my Saviour. I want to love him but I cannot, I know not how to love him as I ought. I often wish I was you or darling Ma that I could look forward to have a heavenly home. I cannot be happy unless I have something to hope for, to look forward to when this most miserable life is ended. Even after the sorrow of leaving home is over the greater sorrow remains. I miss darling Mama. I am so lonely. . . . I should be glad to go to school if Christ was with me. Pray darling Pa that he may be. . . . Oh if I could attain to real true unending happiness I should not mind trials here. But oh how dreadful is my fate, ‘without God in the world.’ All alone! Darling papa write to me and pray for me that the Holy Ghost may enlighten me and that I may be a child of God. I have begun Arnold’s *First Book of Prose Composition*.—Believe me most darling pa your own most affectionate son

CHARLIE.”



In all this language, so shockingly unnatural on the lips of a child of thirteen, he is of course repeating the vernacular of his father, which has become to him a verbal obsession. Behind it he feels the presence of some dimly apprehended but terrible meaning into harmony with which he is trying to force his little life, having been taught that thus only can the longed-for "happiness" be attained. What answer came from the father in response to the agonising cry we can only gather from a letter written by him to Mrs Hargrove during one of his preaching peregrinations—the actual reply to the boy not having been preserved. "Dear Wife," he writes, "I have written to poor little C. . . . Poor little boy, he has convictions when truth comes, an awakened conscience, but it is too easily lulled without God's remedy. If he would only seek after God in His own way—in the diligent reading of His Word and in prayer, the end would be blessed. But it has often been with myself as with him, and the remedy is the same for us both." The mother, writing on 3rd November of the same year, gives the child rather different and, on the whole, more intelligible advice. "You should make a conscience, my dear boy, of being diligent in pursuing your studies; it is, you know, a Scripture precept 'to be diligent in business,' and your business is the cultivation of your mind which the Lord has given you to be trained now, that it may hereafter be exercised in His own blessed service. This should be a high and happy motive."

Counselled by his father to "seek God in His own way" and by his mother to find a "high and happy motive" in his work, the poor boy set himself once more to battle with his miseries and terrors. The remedies did not work. In the new year he writes to his "darling, darling" mother: "At home I am not happy. At school I am not happy. If I had anything to look forward to I would willingly endure all. But (as darling pa said in one of his letters) I am

‘without God in the world.’ Misery now, misery eternally. O wretched! O darling, pray for me, pray that the convictions I have may not pass but that I may be led to seek Christ whom till I find I shall never be happy.”

On 28th August 1854 he is still “unhappy,” but now finds something else to write about. “Yesterday Mr Nangle late of the Achill Mission . . . spoke on Popery and said that he felt assured that the great whore mentioned in Rev. xvii was Popery. First: a whore is one who has left her husband to follow another and that the Roman Church had forsaken Christ for Saints, etc. Second: that the Great City must be Rome . . . I have been reading Ecclesiastes, but I do not understand it. Solomon says that much learning is vexation of spirit. I always thought the opposite.”

Denied the “happiness” which usually comes to children without their seeking it, or even thinking about it, the boy still clung to the hope that if only he could attract the attention of the Holy Ghost all would be well. The result was, as he states in another letter to his father, that his companions regarded him as “a religious fool” and bullied him incessantly; and nothing that he could do either by prayer, or “testimony” in the playground, or study of the Word, or any other mode of “seeking God in His own way” brought relief to his increasing miseries. Amid the innocent follies of his schoolfellows he did his best to “bear witness to the truth,” as his father was continually urging him to do. Thanks to this, but entirely against the bent of his disposition, he rapidly acquired the reputation of a prig, and was rewarded for his “testimony” by cuffs and kicks and opprobrious names. Whereupon he would retire to a dark corner, and there, meditating upon his sinful state, would come to the conclusion that he would never be converted and was without hope either for this world or the

next. As the boy's miseries deepened the father's suspicions increased, and every new letter reveals a crescendo in the warning note. Little did the father deem of the reactions he was helping to provoke.

We pass on to 1857. Three years had now elapsed since the judicious Mr Nangle had defined a whore as "a woman who has forsaken her husband to follow another" and given proof conclusive that the Church of Rome was indicated by the figure. In the meantime there appeared in the school a certain usher with leanings, necessarily kept secret in such a place, towards the Puseyite Theology. This gentleman, in the intervals of his duties, was in the habit of taking walks round Wimbledon Common with favourite boys, of whom young Hargrove was one. To him, somewhat indiscreetly, the usher unbosomed himself and began to say strange things about "the Church." He found an attentive listener, and the poison worked quickly. Hargrove began to ask himself questions. What if Mr Nangle was wrong? What if Dr Pusey was right? What if the "whore" might be otherwise interpreted? What if she was intended to typify not the Church of Rome, but the Dissenters? Why not? The Dissenters had forsaken the Church; and if "forsaking" was the test, who could doubt that Dissent was whorish? And another thing. What had dissenting done for him—the much-bullied, unhappy, ineffectual Charlie Hargrove? Had it brought him to God? No. Had it given him "happiness"? No. Had it cured his cough? No. Had his prayers been answered? No. Had it, after a three years' trial, done any of the things which his father assured him it would do? No. What harm, then, in giving Dr Pusey a trial? And if Dr Pusey fails there is still—but no, *that* must not be thought of yet: let High Church suffice for the present. And a fine thing to tell sister Apphia—that

poor Charlie who has never distinguished himself in anything, never made a score at cricket, never knocked a big boy down, never had an adventure beyond the limits of Arnold's *Latin Prose Composition*, has at length struck out and become an interesting personage. "High Churchman" sounds better than "lost sinner," when we are sixteen years of age.

When a boy of sixteen suddenly changes the religion in which he has been brought up, one may be forgiven for not taking it all too seriously. Who can rationalise the explosions of adolescence? None the less, serious consequences followed. Sister Apphia did not keep the secret; she told her mother, who told her husband, and in a few days a terrible letter had warned the headmaster that a wolf was working privily round the sheepfold. The unfortunate usher was promptly cashiered and sent packing, to unbosom his Puseyism elsewhere. As for Hargrove himself, his pilgrimage had begun. He was on his way to become a tonsured priest.

Of all the cruelties inflicted on mankind by the perversions of Christianity, none are more shocking than those which have fallen to the lot of children. It is not for the amusement of the reader, but for his edification, that I reproduce the following.

*From the Diary of 1857*

January 28, 29, 30.—Happy and in a nice bedroom through God's mercy. O my God, give me grace to trust thee. Show me, O God, my great sinfulness.

February 24.—The Lord has answered me about play, for he caused me to have a walk.

February 27.—O Lord, I do entreat thee to make me love thee. French pronunciation still very bad.

March 2.—I was born in sin and in iniquity did my mother conceive me.

March 3.—French not so well. I have not prayed so much about it.

March 20.—O Lord, give me a desire to work for thee, for parents, and myself.

March 24.—Had a walk on the Common. . . . Thanks to God we often have walks now.

March 26.—Walked again with [the usher]. O Lord, do guide me lest my feet slip.

April 3.—O Lord, do help me in French.

April 6.—I very often now have conversations on religion. I do pray that the Lord may guide me that I be not led astray. (This prayer is repeated through the month.)

April 28.—Had an answer to prayer about French.

May 21.—O Lord, I do indeed feel troubled about my not having been baptized. Am I a child of God? I cannot be. Yet must I suffer from the neglect of my parents, although to them a conscientious neglect. Disobedience to the Church.

May 26.—Are prayers for the dead right? Is purgatory right? Is baptismal regeneration? O Lord, do show me.

May 28.—Mr —— has given me a very different and I believe a far truer view of religion than I ever had before. Not Mr —— but the Lord.

June 10.—A letter from papa forbidding me to speak to [the usher]. Am I to obey? I think so, and yet if his way is right surely it is my duty to hear it. But I will obey, and trust that if it be the right way the Lord will keep me in it. Mr Murray went to town. I daresay he will see papa.

June 13.—Had a letter from mama reproving me for my conduct [in talking to the usher]. He left. And with

him departs my adviser, my teacher, in the most important matters.

June 17 and 18.—I saw him for a few minutes. . . . I have never been in such a state before. Shall I go over to Rome? I thought it impossible six months ago.

Bereft of his Puseyite friend, a “dryness” seems to have fallen upon young Hargrove, and for the next month religion drops out of the diary. But on 26th July, when he was home for the holidays, there is the following significant entry: “Obliged to go to the [Plymouth] Brethren’s. Forgive me, Lord, if it be wrong.” And again on later dates: “Ma is displeased about something. . . . Had a long conversation with [her] about High Church doctrine, without any satisfactory result.” “I hear Papa is very much grieved about it.”

Meanwhile the dreadful discovery has been made that the boy has a *cross* tattooed on his arm! “Take out the Popish sign!” is the instant order; to obey which is not easy. “I put a plaster on. My arm is now very bad, and will I am afraid be little use.” Whereupon he “renounces” baptismal regeneration. Shortly afterwards, the arm having meanwhile recovered—though the cross remained,—the renunciation is itself renounced.

In October we find him at King’s College, “by myself in London for the first time,” spending an occasional evening with his father, who is “much perplexed” at the turn things are taking. For the Lord “has shown me the futility of applying worldly reason to His holy Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. One putting away original sin, and the other in which ‘the body and blood of our Lord is *verily* and *indeed* taken and received’ for the renewing of souls. I am not baptized, and am not God’s child . . . grant that I may not suffer for the sin of my

parents, O God . . . join me to the Church. Every day confirms me in my belief in Transubstantiation and the power of the Churches, *i.e.* England, Rome, Greece and the Eastern—though all more or less in error.”

Hargrove the elder had succeeded in firmly planting the belief in the boy's mind that the salvation of his soul was at stake—hell with its torments on the one side, heaven with its bliss on the other. The belief, as we can plainly see, had become a morbid obsession, overclouding all the boy's other interests, infecting his Latin prose, impeding his French pronunciation, and filling him with vague desires and poignant terrors. But it seems never to have occurred to the father that men have found salvation by many ways, and that if the boy failed in the first he tried, he was certain to try another. At the time of which I am writing, it is clear that he was easily led. He was in trouble, horrible trouble, induced by his father's training, and was ready to snatch at any means of escaping from it. He had been told to trust himself to the Lord's guidance. To the best of his ability he had done so; and, lo and behold, a friendly usher appears upon the scene and begins to guide towards Rome. What answer to prayer could be plainer? He had prayed for help in his French, and next day had gone up to the top of the class. He had prayed for light, and next day light had come while walking round Wimbledon Common with the friendly usher.

The following extract is from a letter written by his father to his mother on 3rd August 1857, just after this episode:—

“I quite believe that Mr N. is a Jesuit in disguise, and all his ways are in keeping, . . . how adapted to work on young and inexperienced minds! I am thankful for your talk with C., and it is quite as well that I should have been absent. I had rather see

him in his coffin than led captive by that unclean and God-dishonouring system. I hate it from my heart, though I trust I hate not one of its victims. I know it so well from seeing its workings so fully in Ireland. If what he has said to me be quite accurate, the whole thing, especially the badge,<sup>1</sup> looks very like the working of Satan. The Lord rebuke him and lay not this heavy load on His servants. His asking to go where you mention was just like his way with me at Wimbledon. When I first went after writing to him, and after speaking seriously he asked me if I had any objection to his going every morning to the Tractarian Church near us. It argues a kind of deficiency in propriety of feeling, but of the Lord's mercy all that has happened to him may be overruled for good. . . .

“Poor little Apphia!<sup>2</sup> Is she looking after the Lord, hiding in the cleft of the rock from whence she may look upon Him without dismay. The Lord bless her. . . . Charles' acting may be of the Lord. May he see His hand in it. How strange that the error which was mainly instrumental in driving me from the Church<sup>3</sup> he should so take up with. . . . The poor little ones! There is no prayer on my lips more frequent for them than that they should be kept, and specially kept from the enemy. Well, *he* has not been kept, but, probably what may be better for him and all of them, he has been entangled in the snare of that fowler, to show all their weakness, and then to be delivered, as I trust he is. I fear that the mark<sup>1</sup> may be left upon him as a memento of his sin and folly. . . . I feel for him and all of them because I love them.

“How well for Mr Murray that [N.] was sent off, and how well that what happened happened to my boy. If it had been another, the parents might have blown up the school.”

<sup>1</sup> Probably refers to the cross tattooed on his arm.

<sup>2</sup> The child was in her last illness.

<sup>3</sup> Baptismal regeneration.



## CHAPTER II

### HIS CONVERSION TO ROME REVIEWED

HARGROVE'S way of life prior to his reception into the Church of Rome betrays a marked infirmity of purpose, and one is bound to confess that there was justification for the ratings and admonitions which both his parents were continually addressing to him on this score. He was unable to keep his mind fixed for long upon anything, and in almost every letter that he wrote from Cambridge he informs the parents of some change in his plans or in his interests. At one time he has "quite made up his mind" to concentrate on mathematics. But the following term he has abandoned mathematics and is writing to his father about the excellence of classical study, to which he has now resolved to devote himself exclusively. The next thing we hear is that he is "going in" for mental and moral science. At the same time he informs his father that he is "cultivating the imagination," and is sharply rebuked accordingly. He picks up friendships all round, with a preference, however, for men who will talk about religion. He leads, as he says, "a dilettante existence," which means among other things, and chiefly, that he wastes a good deal of time in rummaging about in old-book shops. He goes up to Cambridge with the intention of becoming a clergyman; but later on applies for a berth as a schoolmaster. Meanwhile he dabbles incessantly in matters theological, and sits up all night with the doctrine of the Trinity or of the Real Presence.

This indeed is the one impulse which remains constant amid the general waywardness. It was powerful and dominant and defined the direction which his mind never forsook. But at this stage it was an impulse, and nothing more, without definite purpose and almost without definite ideas. Keenly conscious that something painful and even desperate was the matter with him, but not knowing what the matter was, he constantly mistook his interest in theology for belief in religion—a not uncommon confusion. But there were times when he saw his mistake, and he would come to the conclusion that he had no religion at all; whereupon he would write off to the people at home in terms which convinced the terrified household that he was falling into the hands of “the infidels.” From the evidence that remains I am quite unable to arrange the alternations and twistings of his religious opinions in any kind of orderly sequence, nor does his own record, in the chapters that have been presented, make the matter much clearer. The one fact that stands out beyond question is that he could not let theology go; or rather it would not let him go, for it held him as in a vice.

Hargrove the elder was not wanting in shrewd common sense. He was quick enough to perceive that whatever the wiles of Satan might have to do with his son's conversion to Rome it was also, in some measure, an act of desperation which was certain in course of time to work its own remedy. “He will one day be out,” he writes, “as fast as he went in. He has something of my ardent temperament and courts martyrdom. Well, the Lord is very good, and that is my hope.” What the father did not understand was the responsibility that rested on his own teaching for the desperation of the boy. Writing to his friend Bradshaw, shortly after his conversion to Rome, young Hargrove says, “If I am bitter about anything, and

I doubt whether it is right to be so, it is against my old enemy Calvinism, that poisoned, as far as religion was concerned, my whole childhood. Fancy bringing up a child to believe himself the devil's property, as was always taught me."

The full reasons for Hargrove's conversion are not easy to set out, and I doubt if his own account of them is, or could be, complete. As explained by himself the change takes the form of a logical process; but psychology had more to do with it than logic. It was an explosion, due to the violent interaction of a number of forces, not one of which taken singly would have led to any decisive result. It was the effort of his whole nature to get relief from an intolerable situation and to get it at any price and in any plausible form that offered itself. The syllogism by which he says that he argued himself into becoming a Roman Catholic was the puff of wind that liberates the avalanche. It is not a satisfactory argument, and its weakness would have been apparent to him if his condition at the time had been less desperate. For if an infallible authority is needed to guarantee a Divine Revelation, does not any institution which claims to be that authority need another infallible guarantee to authenticate the claim, and so on *ad infinitum*? If human reason may err in its interpretation of the Scriptures, it may err also in the choice of an infallible interpreter, for, after all, there are more claimants than one. Obviously this solution of the problem only raises it in another form. It takes more than that to turn a Plymouth Brother into a Roman Catholic. His father hit the nail more truly when he spoke of him as "courting martyrdom." That is precisely what desperate men are apt to do.

A perusal of his letters and of his parents' during the seven years which passed between his conversion in 1862 and his father's death in 1869—his mother died in 1867—

shows that he not only found martyrdom himself, but that he caused it to them. Agony is the key-note of both sides, openly expressed on their side, disguised and forcibly held down on his. The very pains he is at to assure his parents that he is "perfectly happy" in his new-found faith will betray to the experienced eye that he is nothing of the kind. How could so affectionate a son be perfectly happy with the knowledge ever present to him of what his parents were suffering? And yet the knowledge of their sufferings was precisely the cup he was appointed to drink, and every fresh draught of its bitterness only confirmed him the more that he was right. He wrote out in large letters the text "If a man hate not his father and mother he cannot be My disciple," and kept it displayed on his table.

I have often thought, in perusing these letters, that if his parents had been able, which of course was impossible, to take his conversion lightly, Hargrove would not have remained for long in the Roman Church. As it was, the agonised appeals in their letters had the contrary effect to what was intended. He looked from the letter in his hand to the crucifix on the wall, and then at the terrible words lying on his table, and felt that there and then, in his own person, the prophecy of the Saviour was being fulfilled. What stronger confirmation could he have? Nor must we forget that precisely the same process was going forward on the other side. The more the parents suffered, the more assured they became that the trial had been imposed upon them by the Lord. One can imagine few entanglements more hopeless.

Hargrove the elder was indeed wise enough to perceive that nothing was to be gained by appeals either to the reason or to the affections of his son; that, on the contrary, all such attempts would only serve to harden his obstinacy. "Let us leave him to the Lord, who in His own good time will

show him the error of his ways," is a constant refrain in his letters to his wife. It would have been well perhaps if he could have acted on this principle. But he could not. Often he will begin a letter to Charles by deprecating controversy, but the sentence is hardly finished before he is pouring out his wrath on the abominations of the Church of Rome, holding up the Real Presence to contempt, or reminding his son in words of exceeding bitterness that he has broken his mother's heart. The same with the son's replies. Theologically they could not leave one another alone, and the resolution to do so is no sooner made than broken. Years afterwards the situation was repeated in the relations between Hargrove and his clergyman brother. Nor could either side preserve silence about their personal feelings. In this respect indeed there is often a coldness in the main text of the son's letters, in spite of the affectionate expressions with which they are garnished; but it needs little insight to perceive that their tone is unnatural and forced. At the age of twenty-two he had persuaded himself that he belonged no more to this world, but to Christ and His Holy Mother; and he had to play his part. We must admit that he played it faithfully, but it cost him many a bitter pang. He thought the ties were severed which bound him to earth. Nothing could be further from the truth.

*A Reproving Letter from his Father*

"Nov. 22, 1859.

"Your letter does not at all leave the impression on my mind that you are breaking either your head or your heart with hard study. If you give eight hours a day to hard study without dissipation, it is well. But this dissipation is just what I fear, and while your mind is running on poetry and politics, witchcraft or the saints of the Calendar, I cannot but

fear it is not very deep in mathematics. . . . Remember temptation is a pleasant thing . . . but its fruit is bitter. I have often spoken to you to this effect, for I see your infirmity and grieve over it. But remember, if you would succeed, that you must be firm, you must resist the blandishments of the seducer, and this you cannot do without help from above. Ask the Lord for it, and He will give it. . . . I should look in your case on these seductions of imagination as I should upon the seductions of sin in the case of another. . . . Remember that your safeguard is not to stand by the Creed of St Athanasius but by the Word of God, that Blessed Word that puts to flight the armies of the aliens under whatever banner they come in. If you live on the Word and in prayer, you will get the victory over these beggarly elements for which you seem to have so sickly an appetite. . . .”

*From his Father to his Mother (when Charles was suspected of infidel opinions)*

“Sept. 3, 1860.

“My own conscience is clear before the Lord touching this thing. It was not College work, but the neglect of College work, and the consequent intermeddling with what was outside his work, that did the mischief. He would meddle against my entreaty with other things and evil. He wandered on the devil’s premises, and was caught in one of his snares. God is over it all, and there is some hidden purpose to be accomplished by it.”

In a letter written forty years later to his own son, Hargrove declares that he was “mortally afraid of his father.” In the father’s eyes he had acquired, during the two years at Cambridge, more and more of the character of the *enfant terrible*, and with good reason when due allowance is made for the elder man. He appeared not only wayward

but wilful. He was playing with fire in all directions. He was a source of continual anxiety. That he was free from the grosser forms of self-indulgence comforted his father but little ; for he knew of other and surer ways of going to hell than yielding to the temptations of the flesh. And beyond all his theological fears, there was the feeling, perhaps more poignant, of outraged parental authority, of disloyalty to the traditions of the home and to himself. "It argues a kind of deficiency in propriety of feeling," he had said.

It was a bitter time for both the parents, but chiefly, I think, for his mother. What she suffered has been told in part by Hargrove himself. The following letters complete the tale.

*From his Mother to her Sisters*

"ST JOHN'S PARSONAGE,  
"WOKING,  
"August 18, 1862.

"My poor dear Charles with Josie have been here since Friday last. I am only a few hours come, having been staying at Wimbledon. Your tender sympathy was pleasant to us, we knew that you would feel for us in our deep sorrow. Oh, it has been deep, the waters going over our souls. All the trials of our long pilgrimage hitherto, the sorrow upon sorrow that our God, our loving Father laid upon us, all has now appeared as the small dust of the balance—this dishonour to the name of Jesus, this blight on the long testimony of His servant, so outweighs any sorrow we have ever known. But our God has suffered it to be, and in our deep distress, while the iron has entered into our souls, we would justify our God and wait on Him in humiliation of soul, that we may learn the lesson that He would teach us in this strange trial.

"We had been for some time anxious about our dear child, but such an issue we did not foresee. I

little thought that last day I was with you of what awaited us, yet when my dear [husband] came to my brother's to fetch me, he was very cast down. The dire tidings had come to him. When I read the letter that night, my first impulse was to go to my poor deluded child, but I could not sail [from Dublin] till the next evening. The poor stricken father was unable to meet the circumstances. I can't tell you how he was affected that night. Oh, it was a thrilling horror to us both, and when it was settled that I was to go, his words, 'What shall I do when you are gone?' pierced my heart, and in this state I had to leave him. But I knew that the arm of our God was strong to sustain His poor servant.

"I got to London on the following morning. Then on to Burwell (a village near Cambridge), and there I was told that our poor, poor deluded child had been for over a fortnight in the Brompton Oratory. 'The Oratory'—oh, what added anguish was this! I knew not how to communicate it to the poor father, already seeming to be overwhelmed at the sorrow, but I knew that he would not be forsaken. Well, I left again for London, and Josie, for whom I had telegraphed, met me there, and he and I went at once to the Oratory, and we saw the poor deluded one.

"I can't describe to you what followed, but he was all insensible to my agonised tears and entreaties. Yet he was not without emotion. Poor Josie moved away, turning his back, for he was unable to stand the soul-harrowing scene. Then when I ceased to implore, Josie came up to his brother, and, with his eyes swollen with weeping, he said in a firm tone, 'Charlie, will you be responsible to us for Papa's death?' The poor deceived one, with *an assumed* firmness, said 'I will.' Oh, it was a moving scene. . . .

"We were near the Oratory, our poor dear child in and out with us constantly. He attended to arguments from myself, and when his papa came he



listened to him—to *truth* clear as the sun at noon-day, contrasted well with the appalling character of the direful error he had yielded himself to. He combated all with ‘the Church, the Church,’ and sometimes [with] a solitary text perverted. Oh, my poor poor child, I feel to love so unceasingly while I sorrow over him so deeply. What an awful system it is, so to prostrate the understanding. He is as deeply rooted in error as his papa is in the truth. And this dear, dear boy with his fine mind. . . . We have no purpose, what to do or where to go. The Lord will open our way we trust as it pleases Him.”

*From the same to the same*

“WOKING,  
“Sept. 15, 1862.

“K. thinks that if the poor child had an interview with Hugh Stowell or some such he must be gained over and convinced of his error. But you will see his papa’s letter to him; and *their* human eloquence would have failed to set forth powerful and unanswerable argument more forcibly than his papa’s. Yet all fell powerless on his mind, for it is held by strong delusion that God alone can dispel. When I was so ill . . . on recovering my voice after one of these faintings I looked tenderly upon him, and my countenance must have looked ghastly enough. But when I asked, ‘Does *this* move you; does *this* shake your purpose?’ ‘No!’ Yet his expression was all love to me, all tenderness for me.”

No commentary on these things is needed. They present us with problems beyond the wit of man. For we have to remember that on the other side of the theological wall that divided these loving souls from one another the counterpart to the mother’s sorrow was being enacted. The son, too, was on his knees. The yea of the one side was the

nay of the other ; and the prayers of both were meeting in conflict before the throne of God.

I pass on to a letter of Hargrove's written, soon after his conversion, to his College friend, the Rev. J. C. Rust, now vicar of Soham in Cambridgeshire. The reader will find an interest in comparing this contemporary account of his conversion with that which he gave, forty years later, in the autobiographical chapters.

“ S. MARY'S COLLEGE,  
“ OSCOTT,  
“ *October 12, 1862.*

“ MY DEAR RUST,—Your letter is to me the most sad and the most pleasant I have had. I thought of you often and was even intending to write, but I was afraid that it would be all a joke to you,—‘Hargrove clean mad,’ or something of the kind. I have misjudged you,—pardon me. You know not how much I owe to you : it was this time last year that you were appointed by God to open my eyes to the silly bigotry in which I was indulging. An argument we had about the eternity of hell (O horrible) never left me. If I had been in independent circumstances I should probably have joined the Church at Christmas. But cowardly love and yet more cowardly fear restrained me. It was a most terrible step to look forward to. I knew that it would be the greatest possible trial I could inflict on my most dear father and mother, that it would make me a beggar and in debt. I had moreover no piety, merely the strongest possible intellectual conviction that the Bible spoke of One Church, the pillar and ground of the faith, and that I ought to seek my faith from it. By God's grace, nay almost by a miracle, I who had for years past,—regardless of sin, of love, of fear, nay even of common worldly prudence,—sought only my own pleasure in everything, was given power to renounce all for the truth. It is done :

the trial before it was terrible, but what it has been since,—nothing, nothing. Nay, would that Jesus had allowed me to suffer more for Him.

“You put in inverted commas the somewhat cant phrase of ‘rest in Rome.’ But let me tell you what I have found in Rome. You know something of my life at Cambridge, of its folly and idleness,—not by any means all. I say deliberately that I had no other end in view in all my actions than simply to please myself for the minute. I was the Devil’s slave. Now I have obtained the dominion over passion and pleasure and folly (of course, I mean in comparison to the past) : now I believe most firmly : now I with my poor, vile heart love somewhat Jesus and God, and those whom He has made perfect by His grace—now, too, I am learning to love all men. Of course all this is in a poor enough way ; but however little it be, it is a wonder in me. I am only telling you that God has given me some grace ; it is His and not mine, and I cannot but tell you of it. As for myself in myself, *pauper et cæcus et nudus*. Forgive my boasting : it is only that you may know the fruits of the Church. ‘Rest in Rome,’ ay, and not rest, but love and sorrow and fear and hope and faith.

“‘My faith in the possibility of learning the truth has been sorely tried.’ And if it be impossible for you, what is it for the millions who know less and have less power ? But here is a greater impossibility, that God should have left men, His own creatures, between the awful eternities of heaven and hell without some plain path for escape and safety. A father, to leave his children in darkness and tell them that one road would lead to heaven and all others to hell—O impious thought. A God, to die for men and then leave it impossible to discover how they might profit by His death ! . . . In these circumstances I went to the Bible to find the one way, and there I found again that there was only one way, the way of the Church. Firstly,

I thought, and this without knowing a single Catholic, that God could never have given power to the first generation of His Church and then let it die again. 'Whose sins ye forgive, they are forgiven.' What greater need of forgiving sins then than now? 'Whoso heareth you heareth Me, and whoso despiseth you despiseth Me,' and so on. But this probability that the whole Church was looked upon in the persons of the Apostles was immediately confirmed, for I found 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.' Is this 'you' a different one from those immediately before? and yet the Apostles presently die. Do read the last two verses of St Matthew and make an honest conclusion. Therefore I said the true Church will certainly claim the power of forgiving sins, and a power so great will doubtless be continually used. The gift of miracles will also be claimed by it—and much more. The next point then is its unity: and this was abundantly manifested to me both by reason and Scripture. For what would teaching be worth without unity? *How could it be the body of Christ*, unless it were manifestly one? How, too, could it be 'one faith' if it were three or a hundred faiths? It must, then, be one, one now, and one from the beginning. And this one, authoritative Church must certainly claim to be such, or this, the body of Christ, would deceive men. It must also claim to be the temple of the Holy Ghost and to dispense His gifts—have the right of anointing the sick,—and (as I clearly thought I saw) be founded on St Peter. What Church, then, has these marks? what but Rome? And I looked and found it, as I had concluded the one Church should do, obtrusively placing itself before men, and placed before them—heretics making it known by their very libels and spreading it by persecution; trampling it under foot, as doating in an age of hundreds of years, and it ever rising fresh and strong;—the gates of hell shall not prevail against it

—preaching it by the very intensity of their hatred, provoking enquiry by the audacity of their falsehoods. I found that every Protestant child knew the way of Rome, that every convert preached it. I have been an infidel, and none heeded it; I am a Catholic, and all know and *feel* it. . . .

“O my dear friend, is not my case a warning to you to ‘fly from the wrath to come’? We shall both stand before God some day—you cannot plead ignorance,—and shall I be your accuser? O by hell, by the gnashing of teeth and the smoke of torment going up *for ever and ever*, look to yourself. Talk not of rest, but of *safety*. I will indeed pray for you and obtain for you the prayers of others. For your circumstances are awful. I know not how near death, and you know not how to save yourself from judgment.

“I had thought to stop here, but how can a child stop till he tells you something of his most loving mother? What better guide can I have of the objects I should love than the love of Jesus: and what could Jesus, the perfect Son, love more than His mother, and can I be wrong, then, in loving her; or will my love be ever too great till it is more than the love of Jesus? and is that possible?—O why do not all love Mary, who has borne God in her arms and lived with Him, yea, and commanded Him for thirty years? ‘Blessed the womb that bare Thee, and the paps that Thou hast sucked?’ What higher blessedness is possible? . . . You ask my prayers: will you not ask the prayers of her, whose dignity is before all creatures? For on what creature has like honour been bestowed? *Mater Sanctæ Spei, Refugium Peccatorum, ora pro nobis.*

“You have my reasons for leaving what you would call the Church of my baptism. Above all others was the one that I was exceeding weary of wandering, and when I went to this professed pillar and ground of the

faith I learned nothing from her. How could I? For she does not dare to claim to be the one Church, and how can there be two true faiths? O great is the strength of the Church! I have come to her with nothing, and she has made me very rich. Just before I was received, which was on the 23rd of July, I wrote to Father Dalgairns of the London Oratory, whom I called upon a month before (he was an Oxford man, and is well known among Catholics), saying: 'I am made a martyr to a mere intellectual conviction; I suffer exceedingly for the sake of a proposition. If the Bible is true, there is one visible Church, and if there is such, it is the Roman.' Such was my thought. I never took a step more contrary to my inclination. So far was I from being attracted by Roman worship, that (from my ignorance) I have told many that I preferred Margaret Street and such like places to any Catholic Church. I liked (again I say through ignorance) the English liturgies far better than the Roman. But God's Word says, *one, one*; and reason requires unity for authority, and authority for usefulness. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned.' Believeth what? The Bible? Believe it and you will find the Church in it: or else how will you interpret and choose between all the Bible sects.

"I am at present teaching here: when I am set free by having paid my debts at Cambridge, I should desire by God's grace to join some Order, to do penance for myself and my friends, and to give myself to our Lord.

"Ah! my friend, I have talked much vanity with you: henceforth I would desire to be dead to the world and its riches and its knowledge.

"'Hoc est nescire, sine Christo plurima scire:  
Si Christum bene scis, satis est si cetera nescis.'

“I will ask the prayers of St John and St Cyprian for you, as you are dumb. . . .

“I may as well say that I have written this letter without advice, so you have only my own sentiments, and not those of some clever controversialist, where you always suspect some deeply hidden error.

“Be assured I will remember you continually, and have you remembered at Mass.—Ever yours most truly,  
C. P. H.

“*Sedes sapientiæ, ora pro nobis.*”

## CHAPTER III

### CORSICA AND CARPENTRAS

IN the late summer of 1866 Hargrove was laid low by a severe attack of Roman fever, the effects of which were felt for many years afterwards. His removal from Rome became necessary, and in the autumn he was sent to a convent in Corsica.<sup>1</sup> Of the year that he spent there only the scantiest record remains. There is mention of a long retreat in which he appears to have put himself through a self-examination of the utmost severity, emerging with a deepened sense of conviction and with new ardours of devotion.

While he was in Corsica, news came of the death of his mother in May 1867. An examination of her portrait shows features typical of her son, and I think that it was from her that he inherited his dominant mental characteristics, his supple intelligence, his affectionate nature, and his keen moral sense. She died suddenly, of heart failure, and there can be little doubt that the ever-present sorrow occasioned by Charles's conversion to Rome had hastened her end.

"My dear wife," writes her husband, "was but little fitted for this world. She had the most righteous spirit I ever knew, and it could ill brook the dishonesty and

<sup>1</sup> After prolonged search, I have not been able to discover the name or the precise locality of this convent, "Corsica" being the only place indicated at the head of his letters.



trickery around her. And she had little pleasure from the world. As I have often heard her say, her happiness was in love, and there is not much true love down here, but thank God there is some."

The good man might have added that as her happiness was in love, so, too, was her pain. As I read her letters to Charles, the figure that rises before me is lovely and admirable. Nature revolts at the thought that one so good and unselfish should have been stricken at the last by this cruel blow. Fifty years afterwards I have seen Charles Hargrove wince at the mention of her name. But the responsibility for these things was by no means wholly his.

I append extracts from the father's letter conveying the news, and the son's reply :—

" I SOHO SQUARE,  
" *May 20, 1867.*

" MY POOR DEAR BOY,—. . . It has pleased her Lord who doeth all things well to take to Himself my beloved wife—your faithful and loving though much-grieved mother, who trained you up so carefully and lovingly, and fed you as you were able to bear it with the sincere milk of the Word. It was a poor return you made for all her tenderness and care.

" For a time she was in the daily fear of losing her mind from the blow you inflicted on her. But I will not dwell on this now. To the last she believed that God would in His mercy restore you. She had no confidence whatever in you as to this, either in your purpose or acting, but she had 'confidence in the Lord touching you,' the only true ground of confidence as concerns any of us. . . ."

" CORSIKA,  
" *June 2, 1867.*

" MY OWN BELOVED FATHER,—May God the Paraclete, in this time when we celebrate his first coming down upon the Church, console and strengthen

you in this hour of desolation . . . without whom, as says our hymn—

“‘Nihil est in homine, nihil est innoxium,’

“Before opening your letter, I knew well its contents. I have ever been expecting it. Before taking the step you so much condemn, I had counted the cost . . . but I held back from horror of the consequences. . . . How finally I succeeded in preferring God to man, I know not ; it was certainly not the persuasion of priests. . . . As I have told you before, I had constantly lying on my table those verses, Matt. x. 37 and Luke xiv. 26 [‘If a man cometh unto Me and hateth not his own father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.’] . . .

“I think of all my undutifulness towards her before that time [of my conversion] . . . the vain belief and bigotry of my new-found opinions when I thought myself wiser than the Word of God. . . . It is now too late to write to her, the word Mother is henceforth to me but a word of loving memory. . . . In a little list I once made of the chief benefits of God to me, to keep me more mindful of His goodness, I put down especially the loving care of my mother and the education, both literary and religious (most valuable, though, of course, I consider it wanting in many things). . . . Indeed, ‘I have made but a poor return to her,’ as you say—first, of my own waywardness and self-love ; of the last years, of necessity. Nor can I venture, my father, in the sight of God, to express one word of regret for this last sorrow I have so unwillingly and with so much pain to myself caused to you and to her and to all. I would indeed it were not an occasion of sorrow to you, but, though I should gain the whole world by doing so, I would not retract it. Suffering with the acutest fever I have yet had, I thought myself perhaps near to death, and

in sight of eternity I judged of the faith which I had received, and found in its teaching, and not in any works I have ever done, my hope and consolation. . . . Though an angel from heaven should preach another gospel to me, I would not hear. . . . I have no doubt a clever Unitarian, specially with the aid of diabolical suggestions, could adduce to me arguments both from Scripture and reason against the deep mysteries of the Most Holy Trinity and the Incarnation, which of myself I should be utterly unable to resolve."

Here the letter breaks off into a theological argument, the death of his mother passing for the moment into the background. The father has recently forbidden him to write about "Romish doctrine," and by way of illustrating his own rule, has bitterly attacked the Immaculate Conception in the same letter. To this Charles, defying the rule, now replies; defends the Decree of the Council of Trent as a whole, generally re-defines the grounds of his faith, and justifies his conduct. The whole letter is remarkable, not only for the inner conflict it displays between religious duty and filial affection, but for the unconscious cruelty of its attempts to administer consolation to the father. Saturated with Romanism throughout, every sentence of it must have been a stab to the sorrowing man. And then the irony of his reference to the diabolical suggestions of the Unitarian! Ten years later Hargrove himself was offering these very "suggestions" to all and sundry who cared to hear them.

Six months later he wrote in the same strain :—

"I believe that, as you say, my letters are little agreeable to you. If, indeed, you accepted my letters as a proof of my affection, . . . I should be glad to write very often, but I am afraid that I can never write without occasioning you some new grief. . . .

I was indeed very sorry for the interpretation you gave to my letter of June 1867. All I meant to say was that if I had been the cause of my beloved mother's death, it was not by some waywardness or crime . . . but because I felt obliged to follow at all costs the inspiration of God. . . . Ah, you little know what a terrible effort that step cost me. The want of tender affection has never been one of my defects. . . . Sad as have been the consequences, they are less grave than I had anticipated. I did not think that either you or my mother would have survived the blow so long, but I could not withhold it. I could not disobey God and lose my soul to preserve the temporal life even of my parents. . . . Come through what channel it may, through angels or saints, or priests or preachers, there is but one fount of grace and eternal life, the Word of the Father, God Incarnate, the Life and the Light of men. . . . And daily do I lay everything I possess, friends, health, talents, knowledge at His feet, beseeching only His holy love. I boast, perhaps, but not of myself, for I am only that miserable, ignorant, sin-ridden creature that had long since gone down to hell, were it not for the all-compassionate grace of God through His Son Jesus Christ."

What, indeed, did the son hope to effect by writing thus? Beneath it we can perhaps detect a half-conscious desire to convert his father to Rome, by subtly indicating points of identity with his faith, by repeating and adopting the phraseology of the Plymouth Brethren, and by hinting that the Church gave it an enriched and expanded meaning. He might as well have tried to overturn the Rock of Gibraltar. What enriched the meaning of the phrases in the son's eyes poisoned them in the eyes of the father. Is it conceivable that he should have hoped by these means to heal the wound in his father's heart and to soften him

towards himself? Be that as it may, it is clear that every attempt young Hargrove made towards a better understanding only served to add a fresh bitterness to his father's cup. Witness the reply to the letter last quoted :—

“ 7 SOHO SQUARE

“ February 1868.

“ MY DEAR DELUDED BOY, yet dear to me as my child and the child of my own dear wife now in spirit with the Lord . . . Your letters are a great grief to me. They open afresh the great sorrow of my life. . . . Your letter in reply to mine telling of the departure of your holy and loving mother was a disappointment; there was little or no expression of sorrow, though you knew you were the cause of the illness that removed her. You rather seemed to rejoice at the power given you to rise above any amount of affliction and misery to your family, and that through a most false view of the Word of our Lord in Matt. x. 34, and Luke xii. 52. . . . To give yourself, and that without one word of counsel with your parents, to what you knew was so hateful to us, to forsake us in our old age for that odious apostasy that so dishonours God . . . that is so ruinous to souls! . . . Oh, this was the dreadful blow to us, which I cannot attribute to anything short of the power which, by a wilful and disobedient course, you gave Satan over you, and which power, I believe, he still exercises, though to you he may appear as an angel of light. . . . This was our grief, your going over to such a system of evil. . . . And yet you would apply such words as Matt. x. 37 to such a mother—‘the saintliest mother I ever knew,’ as one said of her. But what is too much for delusion to gulp down? . . . To [God] I look and trust that He will give you an ear to hear that word, Rev. xviii. 4, ‘Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.’ . . . Your light to me is

darkness. The Lord bless you, my poor boy. I must speak plainly to you in faithfulness, but it is not that I love you the less; I ever bear you on my heart before the Lord. . . . You allude to your name.<sup>1</sup> It is lost to us as well as to you. It is never named."

There is majesty in this. Whatever judgment we may pass on his theology, it can hardly be denied that Hargrove the elder stands out as more than conqueror. An impassable barrier divided them, against which love broke itself in vain. The greater agony was the father's, and he endured it to the end. But the son, no less than the father, was standing in his right. "Was it not *you*," he might have said, and virtually did say, "who taught me that nothing counts in comparison with the salvation of my soul? Am I, then, to risk my soul that you and my mother may prolong your lives a few years?" In truth there was no answer. The father was reaping as he had sown.

At the time Hargrove received the letter last quoted he had been removed from Corsica to the seminary of St Sulpice, a Dominican foundation at Carpentras, near Avignon. There for two years he continued his preparations for the priesthood, cut off from the affairs of the outer world, but fully occupied in prayer, meditation, study, and the offices of the Church. Within its own limits it was a strenuous life. Here, as at Santa Sabina, he continued to give himself whole-heartedly, body, soul and spirit, to the system he had adopted. So far from breaking his will, or shaking his belief, the severities imposed upon him only served to increase the fervour of his self-dedication and the raptures of his religious experience. He was deeply impressed by the sincerity of those about him; the brethren were candid, affectionate, and quietly cheerful; the tone was earnest and devout. The Protestant who might search

<sup>1</sup> "Brother Jerome."

the records of this time for evidence of something sinister and deceitful in the practices of Rome would find absolutely nothing to suit his purpose ; and I may here remark that neither then nor afterwards, when Hargrove was poles asunder from all these things, had he one bitter, accusing, or contemptuous word to say about the Roman Church or about its priests. Through all his subsequent wandering he found none whom he loved more deeply or honoured more sincerely than those with whom he was associated in those days ; indeed, he was wont to look back to these associations with an especial tenderness of memory.

His faults as a novice, so far as they were externally observable, do not appear to have been very grave. Every week the Master of the Novices presented each of them with a criticism of his conduct, and from some of these that have been preserved I learn that Hargrove was too hurried and sudden both in his manners with the brethren and in his ministrations at the altar ; that he talked when silence would have been more becoming, and was perhaps a little "forward," as we should say ; and, further, that his robes were so arranged as to show rather too much of his legs when going through the sacred offices in church.

But the discipline he was undergoing was by no means confined to trifles of this sort. There was another side to it, not under the supervision of the Master of the Novices, which involved him in wrestlings and watchings, in fastings and prayers, in continual and meticulous "inwardness," in close self-study, and in painful self-immolation. Here are some of the heads under which he arranged the programme of these exercises. They refer only, it will be observed, to faults "in speaking," and they are followed by similar lists of "faults in eating," "faults in meditation," "faults

in prayer," faults in almost everything in which a fault is possible :—

*“Faults in Speaking*

“1, Excusing oneself; 2, criticising superiors; 3, speaking slightly of others; 4, relating things not to their credit; 5, contradicting others; 6, defending one's own acts, etc.; 7, maintaining uselessly private opinions; 8, speaking about oneself; 9, complaining in any way about health, food, weather, etc.; 10, joking or bantering in excess; 11, speaking worldlily, about nations, etc., etc.; 12, speaking immodestly; 13, speaking impatiently; 14, speaking eagerly; 15, speaking forwardly with superiors; 16, speaking excessively; 17, speaking too much with one; 18, speaking presumptuously; 19, showing off my knowledge; 20, pretending to knowledge which I have not; 21, from false desire of pleasing others and conforming myself to their tastes, pretending myself worse than I am; 22, similarly pretending myself better than I am; 23, many like faults of duplicity; 24, speaking out of time; 25, speaking out of place—in choir, refectory, dormitory, etc.; 26, speaking to wrong persons—fathers, novices, brothers.

“The general motive for every one of these faults being the desire of being known, esteemed, praised, loved, etc.”

With this we may compare an extract from a long document recording his meditations during a retreat. The whole is written in an extremely fine and legible handwriting with hardly an erasure. If printed in full, it would occupy about twenty pages of this book.

“Made to the Prior, the confession for the past year. Principally in reference to my sins and negligence about *Obedience, Chastity, Prayer, and the Search of Perfection.*



- “ I resolved as the general corrective of all my faults,
- “ 1. Continually to make a firm determination of never committing a wilful venial sin.
- “ 2. To cultivate with all care the spirit of prayer. Both by an extreme exactness to the hours of prayer and by continual recollection, modesty, raising the heart to God—resolutions, etc.
- “ *Confession*—
- “ 1. In sickness—murmuring about medicine, food, doctor, etc. ; gluttony, even when dangerous to my health ; total neglect of prayer and mortification.
- “ 2. In obedience—subtracting myself from obedience ; acting contrary to obedience.
- “ 3. In poverty—neglecting all thought of being poor even when sick.
- “ 4. In chastity—sins in thought and word about dangerous topics ; in looks and familiarities ; in general immodesty about my person ; seeking in all things to indulge my passion as I thought possible without mortal sin.
- “ 5. In charity—harsh judgments, and aversions.
- “ 6. In religion—neglect of prayer, confession.
- “ 7. In penance—total neglect of mortification and humiliation.
- “ 8. General negligence about the search of perfection and in the use of all the means of obtaining it.
- “ 9. Since I have been in religion, the exceedingly little good I have done, and the continual bad example I have exhibited : 1, of murmuring and opposition to obedience ; 2, of dissipation ; 3, of familiarities and particular friendships.”

What, we may ask, is the effect on the human mind of living year after year under a discipline such as this ?

It is a problem for the psychologist more than for the theologian. The human mind is not made for the continual contemplation of the *momentous* either in one form or another. Two dangers are clearly indicated. One is that relief may come through the exercises of religion gradually acquiring the form of a meaningless routine. The other is that emotion may exhaust itself and the will break down under the incessant strain. Some mental obliquity is inevitable in either case, and with highly strung natures madness cannot be far off. That means may be found for avoiding these dangers, or at least for reducing them, need not be denied. But they are very great. Speaking to the Unitarians in America thirty-three years later, Hargrove said: "I might have grown old in faith; old and perhaps hardened, doubt gradually giving way to custom which subdues all to commonplace, and strips every mystery of the wonder and awe its contemplation at first invokes. I might be now an old priest meeting young men's doubts with the standard replies, and completely satisfied that the silence of my own reason implied the reasonableness of my own faith." His father might well be alarmed.

There are times when it is hard to take mankind seriously; and never is it harder than when they are fighting to the death over the dogmas of religion. It is a tempting theme for the cynic in all ages. In the present instance father and son were in deadly earnest; but that, in the eyes of many, will only enhance the absurdity of the strife in which they were engaged. To a generation which has ceased to be greatly troubled about its sins it may seem that they were torturing themselves, and wounding one another, about nothing at all. Others will say, not without some truth, that the religion of the two men was essentially the same, and that a mere difference of phraseology divided them. But to take the matter in either of these ways is,

I think, to miss its true significance. It is part of the greatness of man to be susceptible of great delusions. However artificial the question in dispute and however terrible the havoc it wrought among the natural affections, we cannot but admit that it called forth both from father and son qualities of endurance and self-denial which reveal human nature in a favourable light. Let the cynic look to himself. Behind the forms of this irreconcilable conflict lie philosophical problems of inexpressible depth which cannot be dismissed so long as the mind of man retains its highest powers of thought and imagination. Like the cross tattooed on Hargrove's arm, no "plaster" will fetch them out, though the arm may suffer in the plastering. They change their hue, but never depart.

Hargrove became a sub-deacon in April 1868, a deacon (at Avignon) in February 1869, a priest in April 1869 (also at Avignon); all of which solemn events are duly marked by searching meditations and by prayers, full of religious emotion, to Christ, to His Holy Mother, to St Dominic, and to other saints.

Comparing his written devotions during this period with those of the earlier years at St Sabina, I find a deepened self-analysis. But the probing has not yet reached the foundations, has not found and identified the lurking doubt that is slowly eating its way upwards. That is to come later—the unexpected result of this habit of ruthless self-examination which he is now cultivating. As he comes nearer to the dread force which is to cast his present life in ruins his assurance deepens, his will becomes more firmly bent to its purpose, his fervour more ecstatic, his whole religious experience more intense. In correspondence with the inward intensification his outward austerities extend their range and become more rigorous and more detailed in their application. Not the faintest prevision has yet dawned

upon him of the catastrophe that was being prepared by the very means he was taking to ensure his spiritual safety, though to us (and indeed to him later on) the breakdown is perfectly intelligible in the light of subsequent events. He was overdoing his part, and it could not last.

Here follow some characteristic specimens of these exercises which I have chosen out of a great number :—

“ *Resolutions (Corsica), March 31, 1867*

“ 1

“ Feb. 28.—Reviewing the misery of the past month, I resolved as some little remedy to make daily acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity, also daily to renew my vows, during the ensuing month. Having thro’ the singular help of God actually kept this resolution, trusting to Him I resolve thro’ the ensuing month of April,

“ 1. To make daily acts of F. H. C., Fidelity, Thanksgiving, and Submission to the Most High Will of God. Thro’ the act of Fidelity understanding the vow of observing up to death Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, and of likewise tending to perfection inasmuch as I am bound thereto, always, but especially the ensuing day.

“ 2. To apply myself to do all things with a pure attention, commencing with at least the sign of the Cross, and *carefully restraining all hurry and eagerness* in eating, reading, speaking.

“ 3. To read daily some portion of the Gospels and of the Epistles, *committing to memory at least one verse a day.*

“ July 1.—In Jesus our almightiness and Mary our Mother, I would fain this month,

“ 1. Not commit the least deliberate venial sin,

“ 2. Not lose one minute of time,

“ 3. Not perform one action except purely to God.

“ I resolve

“ 1. Not for any consideration to laugh wilfully in choir, but to resist to it with all my power, even tho' all the others should laugh.

“ 2. Not to touch anyone however lightly, and to restrain myself in all familiarity of word or regard.

“ 3. To occupy myself in the time of dressing, etc., etc., in the recitation of the Psalms or other Scripture.

“ 4. To learn by heart daily at least 10 lines of Holy Scripture, binding myself to an Ave Maria for every line not known at night.

“ 5. To endeavour to say with devotion and filial affection the *Sub tuum præsidium, Angelus Domini*, etc.

“ *On rising in the morning—*

“ O my God I adore thee, I give thanks to Thee for the sleep of this night, I desire this day to serve Thee only, continually and with all my might, and thereto in the most precious Blood of Jesus I beseech Thy holy benediction—*Benedictus* etc., *Angeli Dei*, etc.

## “ II

“ Sunday July 14, 1867.—Begins novena<sup>1</sup> of my conversion in thanksgiving and for appreciation and thankful heart.

“ *Meditations on the sins and miseries of my past life—*

“ 1. On my folly in the use of money ; on the greater evils from which God preserved me ; on Holy Poverty, the refuge and penance of the weak.

“ 2. On my fears and misery produced by debt ; on the goodness of God in providing for it ; on the peace of Holy Poverty.

“ 3. On my desires for money ; on the mercy of God in not contenting them ; on the joy and riches of Holy Poverty.

<sup>1</sup> Nine days devoted to special thanksgivings, etc.

" 4. On my sins against Chastity ; on the multitude of sins from which God saved me ; on the dignity of Holy Chastity.

" 5. On my bondage under impurity ; on my wondrous deliverance ; on the liberty of Holy Chastity.

" 6. On my idleness and dissipation ; on the misery and sin produced by it ; on my deliverance from both ; on the fruit of Holy Obedience.

" 7. On the utter wreck of my life ; on my desperation ; on my liberation and Hope.

" 8. On the black darkness in which I was involved ; on my sin and vanity which caused it ; on Holy Faith.

" 9. On my wilful rejection of light ; on the force and sweetness of God ; on Charity.

" *For the octave—*

" 1. On the Divine filiation.

" 2. On the gift of Faith.

" 3. On Hope.

" 4. On the Communion of Saints.

" 5. On the Holy Ghost, and Confirmation.

" 6. On joy and peace in believing.

" 7. On strength.

" 8. On the Holy Sacraments.

" Aug. 14.—On the grace of being separated from my friends.

" III

" 1868

" Begun under the patronage of Mary Q. of the M.H.R., Most Holy and Ever Blessed and Beloved Mother.

" Thy poor little child and servant, Br Jerome Mary, of thy Order of Friar Preachers this day renews his act of consecration to thee and thy service, committing himself wholly to thy fond motherly care, remembering that poor sinners as we are, by the gift and ordinance of thy Son, Our Crucified Lord and

Saviour, we have a right to thee as a Mother, and thou to us as to sons. And in these words '*Ecce mater tua, ecce filius tuus,*' he places all his hope and confidence of perseverance in love and virtue throughout this year and to the end of his life. And in this same confidence he lays before thee, the little practices already begun, or which he desires to begin this year, and what seem his more special necessities and duties, beseeching thee to take him under thy protection and motherly love, and assist him to do and to suffer according to the most Holy Will of thy Divine Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

“ I. Devotion to be particularly cultivated—

1. To the Holy Ghost ; 2, to the Sacred Humanity of O.L.J.C. ; 3, to the M.H. Sacrament ; 4, to the Blessed Virgin Mother of Jesus ; 5, to S. Joseph ; 6, to S. Dominick Our Father ; 7, to my Holy Angel Guardian.

“ II. Intercession to be specially made—

1. For Heretics, especially my father and brother ; 2, for Sinners, specially those to whom I have been a cause of sin ; 3, for the Sick and Afflicted ; 4, for the Dying ; 5, For the Holy Souls in Purgatory ; 6, for our Order and all Religious ; 7, for the H. Father and all Bishops and Priests.

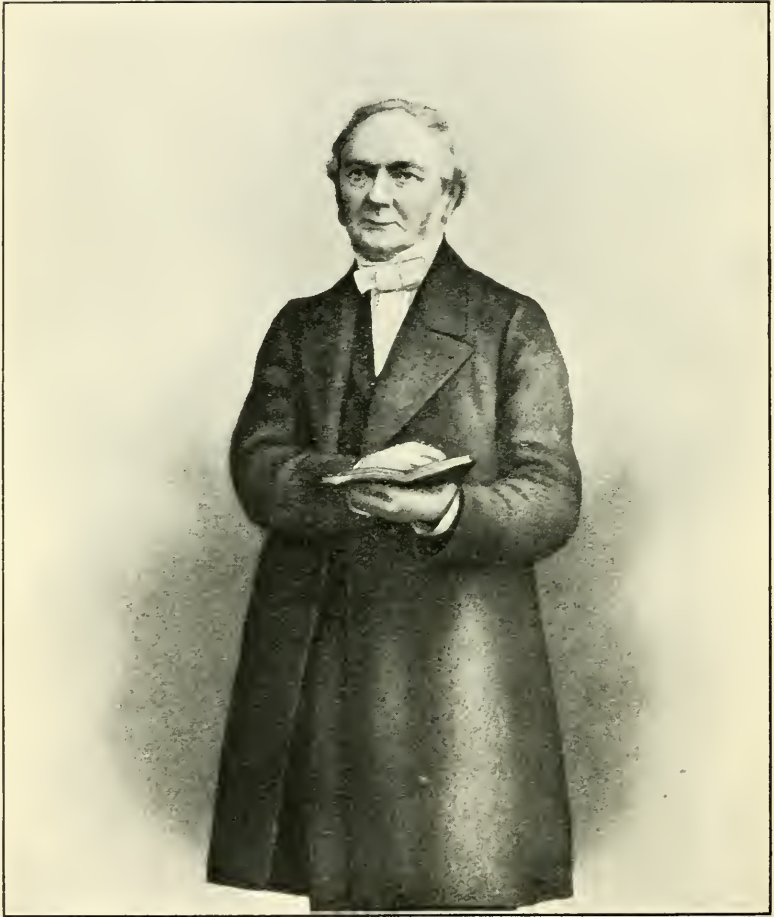
#### “ IV

“ I. God has given me the grace of late to be more alive to my sins and imperfections, and more confessed for them. It is necessary to correspond to this grace by continual examination of your conscience, and an earnest search to amend yourself especially about the occupation of your time seeking never to lose a moment, but to perform all your works with a pure intention and at every interruption or change to renew yourself in the thought of God.

“2. I discover in myself a disposition both dangerous and displeasing to God. It is an obstinate attachment to the observance of the rule, with or against the will of my superiors, so that if I should be hindered in anything I am ready to break forth into anger and murmuring. It is a disposition which in former times has nearly ruined me, and its source is in a spirit of pride and attachment to my own judgment. I therefore lay it now at the feet of Our Lord, and submit myself to whatever humiliation he shall impose upon me. For if our rule cannot be observed by the sole forces of nature, certainly I am very unworthy of the special aid of Grace.”







HARGROVE'S FATHER

## CHAPTER IV

### DEATH OF HARGROVE'S FATHER

IN February 1869, while Hargrove was preparing for his ordination as deacon, or praying in his cell for the conversion of all heretics, "especially my father and brother," the old man, in a friend's house at Tottenham, was slowly sinking, unmoved by his son's arguments, unconverted by his prayers, unconquerable in faith, and radiant in the assurance of eternal beatitude.

Though the evidence on the surface tells a different tale, I believe that the death of his father was the beginning of the end of Hargrove's life in the Church of Rome. Not that it produced immediately an emotional reaction of filial love. The letter which Hargrove wrote to his brother on receipt of the news is preoccupied and cold, though possibly the coldness may have been assumed for a purpose; or it may be that, since the letter had to be read by his superiors, he was unable to give free rein to his feelings. However that may have been, it is clear that another and more subtle cause began to work.

We have already seen that the most formidable obstacle Hargrove had to encounter, both in entering the Church and in remaining there, arose from the implacable opposition of his father. We have seen how his father's opposition provoked him to an ardent obstinacy of resistance, which took the form of a belief that in "hating" his father and mother he was undergoing the supreme test of his

fidelity. Father and son were so made that the presence of fierce opposition, far from weakening their faith, had, as perhaps it has for most of us, the effect of convincing them that they were in the right. The removal of this opposition, in the most terrible form in which he had to encounter it, could not but make a great difference to Hargrove's religious life. It is not too much to say that one of the main motives to the unnatural strain of his will disappeared with the death of his father. From that time onwards I trace a *diminuendo* in the fervour of his adhesion to the Church of Rome, a change of which he himself was wholly unconscious at the time. One by one other interests begin to intrude themselves; his letters become more descriptive of persons and of places—matters of which he has written next to nothing heretofore; he turns more and more to literature and history, and is even capable of conducting a long discussion with his brother on certain difficulties arising out of his father's will. He is becoming less "dead to the world."

It was towards the end of January 1869 that Hargrove the elder received from Sir William Gull his sentence of death. He heard it without a tremor, and at once proceeded to put his house in order. That done, he called his son Joseph to his bedside, and dictated a letter to Charles, resolved that he would strike a last blow for his Master before passing on to give account of his stewardship. We learn that after writing the letter, "he slowly faded away without pain, and in the most perfect possession of all his faculties to the last—a boon which he had very earnestly craved of God and which God graciously granted him. Of course his great feebleness prevented his saying more than a few syllables together, but still he often smiled and said, 'Oh, to depart,' adding, 'Thy will, Lord,' 'Fear no evil,' 'Thou art with me.' And . . . he

often said, 'Jesus, Jesus.' He told us that he might not be able to speak at the last, but that he wished to shout for men and angels to hear, 'Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' At the very last I repeated his text in his ear, but he was too far gone. . . ."

Here, then, is the letter of the dying man. It repeats a good deal that has appeared in earlier letters, but I think the reader will be glad to have it as a whole. Its prescience is remarkable.

"BRUCE GROVE, TOTTENHAM,  
"NEAR LONDON, N.  
"Jan. 23rd, 1869.

"MY POOR DEAR DECEIVED BOY, for you are dear to me as my own poor child, and you are deceived as assuredly as the Bible is God's Word—every letter you write fixes that impression more deeply on my mind, and none more so than the last. You thought, you say, that the step you were about to take would have cost the lives of parents whom you so loved and who had so tenderly loved and cherished you, yet it was better that their lives should be sacrificed than your own soul eternally lost; and how could your soul be saved even at the sacrifice of your parents' lives? By giving yourself to the Church? Oh, who ever taught this but the deceiver of souls? The Word of God says, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' for His precious blood cleanseth from all sin; but you say, 'Join the Church,' a great human structure, full of pretension but destitute of power—the Church is everything with you: it is the objective, not Christ; the Church with you is the way to Christ, in Scripture Christ is the way to the Church; you put the Church before Christ, Scripture puts the Church behind Him. The true Church is just the company of all those who have come to Christ—it is Christ's body, composed of Christ's members, and who are they but simple believers in Him? How can I believe but that he who deceiveth

the whole world has duped and deceived your soul, my poor boy? You have described at different times the deep anxiety and well-nigh despair of your soul in the terrible conflict between the light of your early training and the infidel notions you took up in your wilfulness from infidel books and infidel associations. You may remember that letter you wrote on the occasion of darling Apphia's departure, how full of light it was, in so much that people wondered that we could doubt of the conversion of one who could write such a letter! How dreadful then must the conflict have been between such light and the thick darkness of Newman<sup>1</sup> and Strauss! and in such darkness, such conflict of mind, such agitation of soul, was it a time to form a sober judgment on so important a subject? was it not a time to come and cast yourself upon the parents who loved you, and whose joy it would be to have guided you into the truth? but the deceiver kept the fifth commandment out of your mind, and goaded you on to cast yourself on those who guided you only into error; you bound yourself by the most sacred oaths and vows—is this the way of God's Holy Spirit?—to resist the light of God, the counsel of your parents and everything of testimony to your own conscience so that even now you have to watch against a ray of light entering your mind amid the surrounding darkness, or against anything that would promote a healthy conviction of conscience. Who but the enemy of your soul from first to last could have deluded you in such a course? But you often appeal to the greater purity of your present life. I do not at all doubt it. I believe that the discipline and restraint you are under are most wholesome for you and that your outward life is more pure, and, according to your notion, that you are more sanctified; but oh! it is not God's thought of sanctification—indeed I believe that such discipline was most needful to your most infirm character, and often I have

<sup>1</sup> He means F. W. Newman.

said to my darling sainted wife that I would not wish to see you out of your present position, except it was as truly converted to God, for I believe that if you were free you would run the same reckless course over again, so little do you possess of the *ἐγκρατεία* or self-control ; and much as I hate Popery (and I do hate it with a perfect hatred, while I desire to have nothing but love to every Papist upon earth), yet would I rather see you a Papist than a sufferer from the consequences which your downward course has fearfully presented to my mind. You are now under wholesome prison restraint, and it may be that you hug your chains, but I believe that if your soul ever comes through Jesus into the presence of the God of all grace you will break away from your loathsome errors and entanglements into the glorious liberty wherewith Christ maketh His people free. Remember in all this I have not the least expectation from you, but I have hope in God concerning you. You tell me you read the Word, I doubt it not, and I thank God for it ; but if God speaks to your soul by that Word anything contrary to the dogmas of your Church, then God must submit to man, and that is the way you honour Him. I assuredly believe that every one of the peculiar dogmas of Popery is contrary to God's Word. I hold to the Nicene Creed, for I believe every sentence of it may be confirmed by Scripture, but the Church of Rome 1200 years later added certain accretions of man, every one of which is alike opposed to the letter and the spirit of the Scriptures, and one other has she added within a few years which I am unwilling to designate. Oh, it is a horrid system that Satan has linked you to, so rebellious against God, so dishonouring to the Lord Jesus Christ, ever putting something in the place of Him and His perfect work, and therefore so ruinous to the souls of men. It began well ; but, like everything else in this world, it has failed, and is as unlike the Christianity of Paul's Epistle to the

Romans as any two things can be unlike each other. Like Israel of old, when was there a body so hedged in of God by laws and ordinances, so favoured by revelations, so ministered to by prophets, so much so that God says, 'What could have been done more to My vineyard that I have not done in it?' And yet what was Israel when the Lord came? What was His own word to them, shewing the cause of their decline? 'Full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition.' You think your Church has the Holy Ghost, and is thus preserved from error—so do not I think; but had not Israel the Holy Ghost? (Haggai ii. 4, 5). What believer is there who has not the Holy Ghost? *εἰ δέ τις πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ οὐκ ἔχει οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ*; and yet where is the believer on earth that has not failed and is not a failing creature? Consider attentively the 44th chapter of Isaiah and see in it a picture of your own Communion—he taketh some flour and baketh bread and eateth thereof, and with part he maketh a god and falleth down unto it and worshippeth it; he does not consider in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding. And how is this?—a deceived heart hath turned him aside that he cannot deliver his soul nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? The enemy that deceiveth the whole world, and would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect, hath deceived him; and how is it that he gets such power? because 'they received not the love of truth, God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie,'—it is God's righteous retributive dealing. He gives us His truth: if we receive it, we are safe from the lie; if not, the lie will get power over us. You heard that truth, you professed to receive it, and yet you tampered with it for the lies of Strauss and Newman, and so Satan got power over you, and in your anxiety and agony he led you where you are. Oh, my poor boy, your case has been a sad, sad one! Oh, that God may have mercy on you before it be too



late, and that you may not perish in the abominations around you! Oh, my poor dear boy, if this letter is permitted to come into your hand, I pray you as your parent, I pray you in God's name not to slur it over or make light of it—it is most likely the last you will ever receive from me. I am very very unwell and, the doctors say, of an incurable disease. You will perceive that I write this by the hand of your brother—I could not write myself, and it is a labour to me even to dictate. Your dear brother is with me and cares for me most watchfully and lovingly. What should I do if he also had gone away? I know well that you have the affection to care for me as he does, but the delusion has turned you aside, and the blinding power of a delusion is terrible, and God only can deliver from it. May He deliver you, my dear boy, and draw your heart to Himself, and enable you to give Jesus His own place amid all the lying vanities with which you are surrounded—then we may hope to meet in that place where there is no delusion, for there is no sin and Satan may not enter.

“Farewell, your loving but grieved father,  
“C. H.”

Hargrove must have received this letter at Carpentras three or four days before his father's death. In spite of the warning it contained that the old man had not long to live, he does not seem to have surmised that the end was so near. He replied at once in a long letter of self-defence, meeting point by point the charges his father had brought against the Church, and against himself for unfilial conduct. Again and again he reiterates the assurance of “my true child's love for you, my dearest father.” He declares with new emphasis that in the Roman Church he has found peace, joy, pardon, grace, and life. He goes back to the old days at school and college and tells again the story of how his mind was divided between his father's

teaching and Puseyism, of how he fell into infidelity and became terrified at himself, of how Rome was the only possible alternative to the complete ruin of his soul ; and how all this was clearly and unmistakably the work of God's grace and of the Holy Ghost in answer to prayer. He declares that his father's arguments give him the greatest pain, and proceeds, as usual, to defend himself against them by arguments which must equally have pained his father. The letter concludes with an appeal to their "common faith and love in the Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, one and of one substance, according to the Divine Nature, with the Father and the Holy Ghost"—language, be it observed, savouring of Church rather than Bible, and which, though formally sound in the eyes of a Plymouth Brother, has no prominent place in his religious life, and would have wounded where it was meant to heal.

This letter was never read by his father. Comparing the dates, it must have arrived either immediately after his death or so near before that he was past understanding it—at which we may rejoice.

The worldly goods which the elder Hargrove left behind him amounted in value to about £2000. Among the bequests is one of £100 to Mr Müller of Bristol. The provision which relates to Charles, and the explanatory statement accompanying it, are of interest.

Extract from will of Rev. C. Hargrove, dated May 25, 1866 :—

“I give to my Trustees the sum of £1000 to be invested by them on any of the securities hereinafter mentioned and to be varied from time to time at their discretion on trust to pay the Interest to my son Joseph his executors administrators and assigns so long as my son Charles shall continue a member of the Church of Rome, but in the event of my said son renouncing

the errors of the said Church and thoroughly and entirely separating from its communion within 21 years from the death of the survivor of my wife and myself (on which point I declare that the decision of the Trustees for the time being of my will shall be absolutely conclusive) then I direct that the said sum of £1000 be paid over to my son Charles, but if my said son shall continue in that Church until his death or until the expiration of the said term of 21 years then I direct that the said Legacy of £1000 shall fall into my residuary estate on whichsoever of these events shall first happen."

Extract from a document found together with the will of the Rev. C. Hargrove :—

"I think it right to explain why I have shown more favour to my youngest son Joseph than to his elder brother Charles ; the latter has been the occasion to his mother and myself of sore trouble and suffering, forsaking us in our old age and wilfully and without counsel with us uniting himself to the Church of Rome, a communion which he well knew we look upon with abhorrence as apostate from God, as antagonistic to His Christ and contradictory to His word—but moreover having taken upon him a vow of poverty, everything given to him becomes the property of his Church, so that leaving to him would be giving to that idolatrous and Christ-dishonouring communion ; but in the event of the Lord mercifully interposing on his behalf—as we trust that He one day will—and opening his eyes to the errors and the evil of that unclean communion and his consequent separation from it, then I have made the provision which I name in my will to help him to some way of gaining an honest livelihood : it is not through any want of affection to my poor deceived boy that I make this arrangement—there is no day that my prayer to God does not ascend on his behalf,—but I cannot directly nor indirectly be a means

of helping the God-dishonouring system with which he has allied himself."

In keeping with the father's will is the following letter from Joseph Hargrove to his brother, written about a month after the old man had passed away :—

“ BRUCE LODGE, TOTTENHAM,

“ March 6th, 1869.

“ ‘To the law and to the testimony.’

“ MY DEAR BROTHER,—I have your letter of the 13th Feb., and shall answer it carefully and *finally*, looking to God for help, as this must form a basis for whatever correspondence passes between us in future.

“ You say that you do not intend to force upon me controversy, and I am glad of it, for I had feared that this might have prevented any but the most necessary communication between us. I cannot for a moment admit that you could overthrow my arguments, because I am as sure that your *distinctive* doctrines are erroneous as I am that God's word is true, and though you might be superior in mental ability and controversial power, yet I do believe that by the help of the Holy Spirit I should be able to uphold the truth which He has graciously taught me to love, and that I should experience the truth of the promise—*εἰ δέ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας κ.τ.λ.*—but such arguments would not profit me nor you, I fear. I place my hopes for your restoration in prayer, which ‘moves the hand that moves the universe,’ and I live in the faith in which our holy father and mother died, and so do many of my friends, believing assuredly that God will in His own time hear and answer a petition so much in accordance with His revealed will—*πάντας ἀνθρώπους σωθῆναι θέλει καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν.*

“ You pray for me, you say, but think what a rich treasury of prayers is laid up for you! Did not our sainted mother keep long watches of the night and

prevent the dawning of the morning wrestling with God on your behalf? Did not our saintly father day and night for seven years importune God with his prayers? I had a letter the other day from a man whom God has honoured above most men, and he said that ever since he heard of your error in 1862 he had daily prayed for you, and would by God's help continue to do so until prayer was turned into praise—and I know that many others beseech God to glorify His holy name in turning you from the error of your ways. Shall not all these prayers go up *εἰς μνημόσυνον ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ*?

“So far have I spoken in answer to your letter, and in order that you may understand why for the future I shall avoid controversial topics, at least until I see that some good is likely to result therefrom.

*“Veritatem loquamar in caritate.”*

As we review the story of this poignant conflict, now brought to an end by the great “Terminator of Disputes,” we see the controversy which has been waged for centuries between the Catholic and the Protestant focussed into a brief moment of intense and terrible light. That the combatants were father and son only serves to reveal more clearly how irreconcilable were the opposing forces. From first to last no surrender was possible on either side, save at the cost of a soul proving untrue to itself. These two were great antagonists; each was loyal to the Highest that he knew; and in that very fact lies the hint of a reconciliation which it were vain to seek elsewhere.

## CHAPTER V

TRINIDAD (1869-1872)

THE selection of Trinidad as the place where Hargrove was to begin his labours, as a priest and fully qualified member of the Order of Preachers, was in theory the act of his superiors. Practically, however, it was his own, for it is clear from various indications that some liberty of choice was allowed him, and that work in England was one of the alternatives. In a letter to his brother he says that he had 'offered himself' for the Trinidad mission, and adds words which show that his desire was to immolate himself to the uttermost in the service of Holy Church. Certainly no harshness was employed, though his vow of obedience required him to go wherever he was sent.

An English priest, speaking French, was needed on the staff of the Dominican mission in Port of Spain. The work was known to be arduous and discouraging; the climate was trying; the negroes and half-castes among whom he was to labour were ignorant and immoral; of intellectual attractions, whether from lay society or that of his fellow-priests, there were next to none. "Sapless days," wrote a friend who knew the island, "buying and selling in the morning, and talking small scandal in the evening, taking care always to keep on the right side—the broad sunny walk by the fruit-laden trees, not the rough stony lanes that men lose and strike boldly through woodland and meadow. It does not pay in this world to speak what one thinks—at least

in the Colonies." And yet, as we shall presently see, it was in Trinidad that Hargrove found a rougher and stonier lane than any he had trodden heretofore and lost his way completely, "*nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita.*" Two years later he wrote in his diary: "It is not the first time in the journey of life that I have come upon a way difficult and uncertain, and that I stand all alone in the thick darkness. I cannot see one step before me, I may not stand still, and yet ruin is on every side of me."

The fact that Hargrove was chosen for service at a remote and unpromising outpost does not imply that his abilities were underestimated by his superiors. It is accordant with the custom of the Roman Church to test young priests by confronting them with conditions such as those which were to be expected in Trinidad. The event proved it a mistake. Had his superiors studied him closely they might have perceived that his faith at this time was far from being self-sustaining, that he was making a violent effort to believe, that he needed all the collateral aids that could be afforded him, and that it was therefore a dangerous thing to place him where he would be exposed to sudden fits of depression. Being what he was by temperament and training, he should not have been removed from the society of Catholics who stood on his own intellectual level. He should have been kept in close contact with Romanism at its best and in surroundings where the visible majesty of the Church gave support to her claims as an infallible guide.

In Trinidad the majesty gave place to quite other characteristics. With none but half-educated priests for his daily companions, surrounded by immorality and ignorance in the lay population, oppressed by the heat and the loneliness, and suffering from a constant sense of spiritual starvation, it was no wonder that the significance of the

Holy Mysteries grew more attenuated, and that the syllogisms which formed the bedrock of his faith began to dissolve. "Mass at Convent," he writes in his diary for Holy Saturday 1871, "beginning from the Introit, as I was told, and great bell rung at Gloria! Ceremonies at the Cathedral very bad: Prophecies read consecutively by the Prior without waiting for the Tracts. Sung in the same manner by the Subdeacon. Litany not repeated. All very badly done." There are other entries in the same strain, and to all his expostulations he could get no answer beyond, "Oh, that is the way we always do it here." He is "always wondering and disgusted at the negligence of those who believe in the Blessed Sacrament." Romanism as he encountered it in Trinidad was indeed very different from what he had known in the convents, its ritual disorderly and often undignified, and the negro laity grossly superstitious. He once told me of the shock he received when, on going to say Mass at an up-country church, he found in the vestry the wooden image of a "buck nigger," attired in dress coat, silk hat, and patent leather boots, and was informed by the priest in charge that the figure had long been venerated by the negroes as St Anthony of Padua, and that he had the greatest difficulty in persuading them to give it up. Shocks of this kind were frequent, and they were little likely to sustain a faith which was balanced, in the last resort, on a knife-edge of logic.

His last letter before leaving England on October 16, 1869, was addressed to his brother Joseph, then studying for ordination in the Church of England. The two brothers had seen a good deal of one another during the few days prior to their separation, and for the time being brotherly feeling had thrown a bridge over the theological gulf that divided them. "You seem to have an impression," wrote Charles, "that I shall return again, and I have rather the



contrary. But our Lord knows how He will dispose of me. I ask but one thing—the glory and honour of serving Him loyally and lovingly all my life ; and, for you, that we may be united more closely than we should be by merely living together in the harmony of mutual silence and forbearance. . . . I have been very thankful that our Lord has brought us together. . . . I shall never ask you for money for things that are in any way necessary, nor for luxuries. The first my superiors give me and are bound to give. The second I could not use in consistence with my vows. . . . Since I have been in the Order I have met only with wonderful kindness and generosity and have no need to recur to others. Nor would I accept one penny if I could not think it was given me with a right willing heart.”

The voyage to Trinidad occupied sixteen days. There were, he says, two clergymen on board “with whom I got on very well” : Austin of Cambridge and Alleyne of Oxford ; and another man who began by attacking the celibacy of the clergy, “and passed on to attacking the Divinity of the Lord Jesus (God blessed for evermore). It is not difficult to refute such talk, but, to one not hardened to hearing it, a little difficult to support with patience.” Otherwise the voyage seems to have been barren of interest, if we may except the discovery one night of a flying fish in his bed. It had flown in, he is convinced, “through the porthole”—which may be doubted.

On November 5 we find him established in “the Presbytery, Port of Spain.” His first impressions of the island are summed up in the sentence—in a letter to Joseph—“Trinidad is not Paradise,” “hotter in November than Rome was in August,” and the mosquitoes far from pleasant. No definite work has yet been assigned him, but he trusts “the Lord will give him grace to correct his feebleness and frailty” when work begins. Meanwhile he

is reading Sophocles and Æschylus, which he is glad to have in his portmanteau, since the "library here" contains nothing but the *Acta Sanctorum* and such-like—a sign that his soul is beginning to hunger for new meat. Shortly afterwards he is reading Horace "in the silence of the tropical forest," and thinking, no doubt, of many things which remind him vividly of a world to which he believes himself to be dead.

On November 24 he informs Joseph that yellow fever is rife in the town, but he "cares little about it: sin is the one great evil we must fear exceedingly." In the next sentence he asks for the correct rendering of a difficult passage in Pindar; and, writing to Bradshaw on the same day, asks for "an old Spanish book" and for more of Sophocles and Æschylus, as a relief from the *Acta Sanctorum*, and then adds without a break that "his great consolation is the hope of God's mercy," signing himself as usual "Friar Jerome."

"I cannot say," he writes a few months later, "that I like the country, though others speak rapturously of it"—perhaps referring to Kingsley. "Green, green, green and almost nothing else, never a bare rock or wild moor, unless the savannahs (whose very name expresses the softness that pervades everything) might be called so in spite of their rich, luxuriant, neck-deep vegetation. No autumn, winter, and spring, with all their beauties which I have so much loved, but one perpetual summer and one heat ever the same. And not even to atone for all a real ocean . . . but a sad wide gulf (Golfo Triste, Columbus called it) skirting the shore with pestilent marshes, never since the sea first broke through and formed it knowing one storm or high wave. If I had much time on my hands, I think I should soon grow homesick."

The New Year finds him settled down to regular work,

“given up to the service of niggers. I am very much occupied, for besides other parish work I have care of the poor school. I try to improve on the parrot system of education. . . . One great difficulty is the language, for we teach everything in English, but out of school almost all talk Creole French. In consequence they learn to read without understanding a word. The children are sharp and much more precocious than Europeans. . . . To the age of four or five or even older they are as often naked as not. Some have a hat, others a shirt-collar, many a little cotton shirt reaching to about their navel. We do not admit anyone to school without shirt and trousers. . . . The immorality is very great, and there is no public opinion against it. Of the baptisms at least one-half are of illegitimate children. Some of the first men of the town lead notoriously bad lives. This is in great part the consequence of slavery, but things are, of God’s help, improving. . . . After a certain age the people seem to get very dull, and their ignorance in religion is astonishing.” “Have I ever told you how strange a place this is for nationalities? <sup>1</sup> I doubt if there is anything like it in the world except perhaps Demerara. We have Hindoos, some 10,000, from every part of India, heathens and Mahomedans; Chinese in large numbers, heathens; a very few (thanks to Spanish slavery) aboriginal Indians; Spaniards; French; Germans; Italians (not many); Yankees; Arabs, come through France from Algeria; Africans many, brought over long ago as slaves and since then as free labourers; English, Irish, and Scotch, of course; and then, the mass of the population, Creoles, speaking a corrupted French or English, of every variety

<sup>1</sup> The population of Trinidad at this time was 110,000, of whom, according to Hargrove, there were 25,000 in Port of Spain and 17,000 “under our care.” Conditions in the island have changed greatly for the better since Hargrove was there.

of type and colour imaginable. Here the first thing before addressing a person is to find out his language, . . . with a boy at school to get him to understand the simplest words of what is supposed to be his mother-tongue. . . . No very attractive sphere of labour. The climate is above all trying for the extreme weariness produced by all exertion. For the rest I get on well enough, by means of bromide of potassium, an almost new medicine, which I find exceedingly useful. . . .”

His work takes him constantly to the hospital, the jail, the barracks, the convent, where he sings Masses, gives the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, hears Confessions, preaches, catechizes, or administers the last rites to the dying. One day I find him “going out to bless a ship of Mr Lynch’s, and took two hours over it.”

His first sermon, “written and committed to memory,” was preached on December 5, 1869. The subject was the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which he first explains as necessarily involved in “the scheme of salvation,” and then defends against the particular objections of Protestants. The sermon shows that the hard training he had received had not been thrown away. The arguments, marshalled in the order of ascending importance, are forcibly stated and rounded off, without undue elaboration, to definite conclusions ; and the whole is then knotted together in a final appeal to the hearts of his hearers. It is by no means the work of a novice, but suggests rather the finished scholar and the trained rhetorician. I append a few extracts :—

“Far from yielding to the outcry of her adversaries the Church has only become year by year more fervent in the dutiful honour of the Mother of Jesus and in the assertion of her privileges ; till of late the Successor of Peter, yielding to the unanimous prayer of the

faithful, solemnly declared it to be of faith and revealed of the Holy Ghost that 'the Blessed Virgin Mary, by the singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, had been preserved intact from all stain of original sin.' And the Christian world received the message of the Apostolic See with joyful submission, and each year as the anniversary comes round we celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception with renewed devotion, as we are now about to do by the solemn *triduo* we commence this evening."

"We believe in the Immaculate Conception, not because we think we can find proofs of it in the Bible, nor because it pleases our imagination and is conformed to our judgment of what is probable or becoming, but because the Holy Catholic Church so believes and teaches."

"To such humiliation could God descend for love of us that He laid aside His Infinite Glory and came down to us in obscurity and poverty and dependence. One thing alone there was He might not, could not, touch. He would bear to the full our punishment and misery, but sin must not approach Him. . . . How could it be consistent with His unutterable aversion and separation from sin that He should receive His Life and Flesh from a contaminated source? No, for His sake, for His honour and adorable purity Mary must be free from sin, untouched and unsoiled by aught unworthy of Him. So, coming a stranger to His own earth shall He find at least One whom He may unreservedly love, one sinless heart to love Him, one pure bosom for His rest; or else vainly were those fond words of old prophesied of Him in the Bridal Song of Solomon, '*Quam pulchra es soror mea sponsa, amica mea, columba mea, immaculata mea, tota pulchra es et macula non est in te*'—'How beautiful art thou, my sister, my bride, fair art thou as the snow on Lebanon, undefiled art thou and all beautiful, my chosen one, and stain of sin is not found in thee.'"

“Therefore, O Holy Virgin Mother, unblushingly will we confess thee. With all titles that faith and love have ever found for thee, boldly will we honour thee. Defiled with sin of origin and of act all proudly do we look to thee, a daughter of our race, but immaculate, undefiled. *Tu gloria Jerusalem: tu letitia Israel: tu honor populorum.* Truly art thou our glory and our joy, for in thee God’s love of us is manifest, and the insult of the spoiler is silenced. Hail then, O Virgin Immaculate! In union with the ten thousand thousand tongues of all nations which shall welcome thy coming Feast, do we salute thee. And do thou, mindful of thy sinful children, ever pray that through the Blood of thy Son we may be found pure of sin in the hour of death and judgment.”

He preached frequently, keeping in his diary a careful entry of the subjects and lines of thought. Here are a few of his subjects taken at random: Final Impenitence; The Reason and End of a Retreat; God the Master of all Things; The Desire of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; Diabolic Possession by Mortal Sin; St Patrick the Glory of his Children (for St Patrick’s Day); The Glory of St Joseph in the Perpetual Service and Adoration of Christ; The Obligation of the Christian Minister to preach Disagreeable Truths; Confession the One Way of Safety; Death Certain and Uncertain; St Vincent de Paul; The Insufficiency of our Righteousness; The Panegyric of St Francis; The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

Early in January 1870 there came to the island a distinguished visitor in the person of Charles Kingsley, whose lectures Hargrove had attended at Cambridge when the former was Professor of Modern History. The two met, the incident being thus recorded by Kingsley (*At Last*, vol. ii. ch. 6): “As we went to climb up the Matapolo root-ladder we were stopped by several pair of legs coming down it, which belonged, it seemed, to a bathing party of

pleasant French people, 'marooning' (as picnicking is called here) on the island; and after them descended the yellow frock of a Dominican monk, who, when landed, was discovered to be an old friend, now working hard among the Roman Catholic negroes of Port of Spain." Hargrove himself merely remarks about this incident, "Kingsley is here, and I am going to see him this afternoon." Of what passed between them there is, alas, no record.

As time wore on he became more reconciled to his surroundings—at least there were moments when he expressed himself in that sense, though the same letter often betrays a deep undercurrent of discontent. On September 24, 1871, he is engaged in a great fight against secular education in the colony, and declares that he has found his place and hopes to live and die where he is. Shortly afterwards he is "beginning to appreciate the difficulties of his situation." Meanwhile he is "yearning for a student's life," and yearning all the more as the pressure of his work leaves him less and less time for study. From the variety of the books he asks for we may gather that his mind was in some disarray. He wants a first-rate English Dictionary, for he is determined to improve his education in the English language. He wants Rosenmüller, *In Vetus Testamentum*, whose mild heresies about the Old Testament he is prepared to overlook—though the same author, *In Novum Testamentum*, he would find altogether "too revolting"; and then, a few months later, thinks he had better have *In Novum Testamentum* as well. He wants all that can be sent him on the classics, both texts and translations. He wants newspapers *ad libitum*, especially *The Spectator*, whose religious tone he "detests," but yet finds interesting. Some of these requests evidently awoke the curiosity of his brother Joseph. "Why, for example, are you so anxious for the big English Dictionary?" To which comes the

significant reply (May 10, 1872), "I do not know what may become of me yet."

From the letter which contains this answer we gain no direct evidence that Hargrove's loyalty to Rome was on the wane. But clearly it was becoming mingled with other interests; and, as we know, the significance of everything in this world depends on the other things that go along with it. Sophocles and the Breviary; Mill on Liberty and the *Acta Sanctorum*; Lactantius and George Eliot; Rosenmüller and Rob Roy Macgregor; an English Dictionary and the Claims of the Pope; stifling days in a malodorous schoolhouse packed with half-naked piccaninnies; sleepless nights relieved by excessive doses of bromide of potassium; "yellow fever and sin" raging around him; his only correspondent a brother who regarded him as damned; nostalgia and physical weakness—mixtures such as this are apt to become explosive.

In the winter 1871-72 a terrible epidemic of smallpox swept over the island, and the coloured population in Port of Spain perished like flies. Of the part played by Hargrove during the visitation I have no evidence beyond the modest references in his letters to Joseph and the matter-of-fact entries in his own diary; but these are enough to prove that he performed his duties, whether as nurse or confessor, with entire recklessness as to his own safety. "At present," he writes on 8th February, "there must be at least 1000 persons suffering from various stages of the disease in this town. . . . Our work is incessant. Since five months we have been in quarantine, and no one can get away from the island except in a sailing vessel. . . . Commerce is at a standstill, and there is much suffering among the poor. . . . Smallpox is not a disease one can get accustomed to; for myself, I have more horror of it now than ever I had before. The poor lie for the most



part on the ground, . . . and if you would speak to them you must needs lie down beside them on infected rags and often in an almost insupportable stink. I carry a smelling-bottle with me for fear of vomiting. And sometimes the physical suffering accompanying the disease is so great as to be more sickening to the soul than the stench is to the nostrils."

The following entry in his diary for January 9, 1872, will show how his days were spent at this time :—

"6 A.M. Mass ; communion at Toll Gate ; funerals at George Street, Charlotte Street, Spanish Court, King Street, Piccadilly Street ; 3 sick people, Dry River (3 cases smallpox) ; office ; library, took out Mill's *Political Economy* ; paid bill ; returned at 11, to go out again to a woman called Brunette, in Mrs Isidore's Court ; to a Protestant in Duncan Street, apparently dying and wishing to become a Roman Catholic, living with a Protestant woman ; promised to think about their case and return ; 12.30, dinner ; sleep ; 3 P.M. funeral in George Street, mistook the house and did another funeral—that of Mlle Benitez ; 4.10, back to Duncan Street to the Protestants, Samuel Quin and Grace Lloyd and a little girl of the latter by another man ; confessed the two former, giving conditional absolution, and baptized all three under condition ; gave extreme unction to Quin ; coming out, I was called to the house opposite, where I found the 'little preacher' very bad with smallpox ; went to Paul Giuseppe for a glass of wine ; 3 sick women in St Joseph's Road ; to Alex. Sequint in Henry Street, confessed him, and dressed a blister which some foolish person had put on him as a remedy for his smallpox and covered it with paper ; 7, supper ; 8.30, went to bed, reading Burton's *History of Scotland* ; awaked at 10.30 for a funeral, which I refused to do till morning, thereby exciting no little unreasonable complaint."

For nearly five months these horrible experiences were repeated day by day. Hargrove never flinched, doing to the uttermost that which his duty as a faithful priest required of him. But we know by the light of subsequent events that during the whole of this time his mind was involved in a torment of doubt, and that he felt the ground sinking under his feet at every step. As he said mass, or heard confession, or administered extreme unction to the dying, a voice would ever whisper in the depths of his soul, "Do you *really* believe? Are you sure that all this is not *make-believe*? These arguments of yours—do you repeat them because they convince you, or because they help you to disguise from yourself your radical unbelief? What, then, if this life that you are living is, in essence, an acted lie?" "A day of sadness to me," he writes on August 4, 1871. "Am I a monk at all—living in literature, in the pleasure of the day? No thought of eternity, no prayer, no mortification. Oh, to live in the hope of the blessed vision of God and on its temporal type, the Blessed Sacrament!"

One day, he told me many years afterwards, he was walking alone, on the shore, if I remember rightly, of the Golfo Triste. He was thinking of other things, when suddenly the question, "*Do you believe?*" seemed to start out of nowhere and to overpower him. Involuntarily the answer came to his lips. It was "No," and he shouted it aloud.

There was another occasion (was it another, and not the same confused in memory?) when his refusal to believe took a more particular form. I will give the story in his own words, as he gave it four years later when entering upon his work as a Unitarian minister in Leeds:—

"Of corrupt life I saw, thank God, little or nothing [in the Church of Rome]; and as to doctrines, those which are distinctly Roman seemed to me then, as they

do now, to be for the most part but logical developments of common orthodox doctrines and not a whit more difficult to believe. But there was one doctrine which I had with the greatest reluctance accepted, which I never believed without difficulty, and which I was always vainly trying to make out to be possibly true. It was that of the eternal punishment of the lost. Often have I wrestled with my doubts, talked over the matter with the wisest theologians I knew, read everything I could meet with on the one side and avoided all against it; but all was in vain. Well do I remember the night when, walking up and down in the convent grounds beneath the tropic skies, I stopped and said aloud, 'I do not believe it.' That moment I incurred excommunication, my real connexion with the Church ceased, *though none but myself knew it.*<sup>1</sup> . . . Having then denied one article of the faith taught by the Church, all fell from me; for having accepted *all* on authority, and having in *one point* declared to myself the authority mistaken, its hold on me was gone."

One searches almost in vain through the documents of 1872, which consist in the main of diaries, and of letters to Joseph, for explicit indications of the tremendous change that took place in August of that year. The event, when it comes, has the suddenness of a great surprise. Up to the very last I find Hargrove defending his position, in the correspondence with his brother, with a fervour which seems to imply that he is irrevocably fixed in the Catholic Faith. Nor does a first reading of the diaries give any other impression. It is only on a second reading, and when the end has become known, that the eye is caught by significant asides wedged in amid the daily record of priestly duties, private devotions, and summaries of sermons in defence of Roman Doctrine.

<sup>1</sup> Italics mine.

On May 1, 1872, he records a resolution. "Sung Mass. I have consecrated myself this month to the Blessed Virgin Mother that I may have some hope to recommence a ruined life. Resolution: to endeavour not to be absent from choir once without cause." This entry marks, I think, the last desperate struggle of Hargrove to retain his hold on the Catholic Faith. It shows that his doubts had already developed to a point where effort was required to keep up a punctual performance of his stated devotions; and, what is more important, that he was not yielding lightly, but exhausting every resource of mind and will in a life-and-death struggle with the adversary. He knew what he was doing; he was under no illusion as to the terrible danger—as it must then have seemed—he was incurring; he fought his doubts to the limit of his spiritual strength, and when at last he was overpowered, there was no subtlety of argument, no device of prayer, penance, work, or self-denial which he could not claim to have tried and tried in vain.

On July 4, his birthday, he writes:—

- "My life is beset at present by three great dangers.  
 "1. Of being overwhelmed by the consequences of past sin.  
 "2. Of being poisoned by frequently repeated sin.  
 "3. Of being wasted in idleness and diletantism."

Then follows a list of prayers to be recited daily, as a protection against all three.

There can be no question, I think, that the sin to which he here refers is doubt—the deadliest of sins for one in his position, as sin is interpreted by the Church of Rome.

On July 6 he is again trying to fortify himself by writing out his old arguments. In the process of doing so, however, he reaches a conclusion different from any

that had occurred to him before and obviously fraught with fresh dangers to his peace of mind. Here is the entry for that date :—

“A religion professing to be revealed of God may be certainly true, may be certainly false, but cannot be really doubtful—that is to say, it cannot be such as a wise and unprejudiced man would doubt about, neither accepting nor rejecting it. For this would imply that God may have revealed Himself in such a manner as to make His revelation useless. For what is not sure cannot be prudently trusted. However, it is certain that there is no religion about which wise and well-intentioned men have not doubted. Are then all religions false? Nay more, there does not seem to be any way by which a revelation may be made more than very probable, or such as would absolutely admit of no doubt whatsoever. Is then all religion revealed impossible? No, but the conclusion is rather that if there be a supernatural religion it requires a supernatural certitude—that is, a light added to reason by means of which it is accepted as not only probable to a high degree but absolutely certain; or, in other words, a revealed religion requires a revelation in order to its acceptation, a revelation not made to all as the religion itself revealed, but made to each recipient in order to the reception of the truth.”

Note these last words: “a revelation . . . made to *each recipient* in order to the reception of the truth.” Had any such revelation been made to *him*—Charles Hargrove? The answer was—No.

We now come to the day of crisis, July 23, the anniversary of his conversion. The words which follow comprise the whole entry for that day :—

“When I gave up all to become a member of Holy Church, I did it not because I believed in particular doctrines which she alone taught, but because I was

persuaded that if there was indeed any religion revealed of God, there must be also a teacher of the same, living and infallible, tracing its authority uninterruptedly from Christ. That there was no such but the R.C. Church was plain.

“There were, then, three propositions on which I relied in justifying this great step :—

“ 1. There exists a religion revealed of God.

“ 2. Such a religion requires a living infallible teacher.

“ 3. If there be on earth a living infallible teacher, it is the Church of Rome.

“After the lapse of ten years I return upon these propositions. I ask myself if I acted too hastily or passionately. I am compelled to answer the second and third propositions are, after repeated examination, as indisputable to me now as ever.

“*If the first be wrong—and it, no doubt, may be questioned,—then all is over.*”

“It may be questioned.” When Hargrove had thus openly confessed his doubt as to the proposition “that there exists a religion revealed of God,” he fell under the major excommunication, and his life as a priest of Rome was virtually at an end.

This explains why the diary, prior to this date, contains so little evidence of the terrible struggle that was going on within him. To chronicle his doubts would have been to admit them, and to admit them would have been fatal. They could not be *expressed*. At all costs they must be *repressed*: the salvation of his soul depended upon that. His sermons in defence of the Faith, his controversial letters to Joseph, his endless repetition of prayers, his stern resolve to say nothing of the fearful thing that was haunting him, were all variant forms of the desperate struggle he was making to keep the Tempter at bay.

In writing to his brother shortly after his secession he mentions incidentally the conditions under which a priest of Rome is allowed to study arguments which make against his religion. The third condition is that he shall be "determined not to yield assent for one moment, *nor even doubt*, however conclusive an argument may seem to him." And he adds, "To this I can no longer submit. The liberty God has given me, man shall not take away."

A fuller account of the reasonings which led up to his secession, as they appeared to him twenty-eight years after the event, occurs in an address he gave in 1900 to an assembly of American Unitarian ministers in Boston.

"Two questions which had scarce ever obtruded themselves within the convent sanctuary became daily urgent, clamouring incessantly for answer, and refusing to be satisfied with exorcisms instead of explanations. The first question took the form of an indirect but decisive attack upon the authority to which I had delivered myself up; the second assailed the reality of the sacraments as objective means of grace.

"I had no difficulties about what is generally called peculiarly Roman doctrine. I found it easier to believe in the infallibility of the Pope than in the infallibility of the Hebrew Scriptures. The Immaculate Conception presented no difficulties to me when once I admitted the Virgin birth of Christ. Even transubstantiation was only an extension of the doctrine of the Incarnation: if God Almighty took the form of a babe, and hid His glory and His omnipotence under the guise of what is frailest and least among men, I could believe that He had perpetuated His Presence under any forms which might please Him. Was it for me to limit His love and condescension to this method or that? But all such doctrines, Catholic and Protestant alike, are only subsidiary to the fundamental hypothesis of all so-called orthodoxy. Popular

religion is in the main an explanation of man's relation to God, his origin and his doom. Between the two lies his life, and doctrines and rites are so many means to the right adjustment of this life that the doom may be in his favour. Are the doctrines credible? are the rites efficacious?—these are the questions on which Christian controversy has exhausted itself up to now. But prior to these comes the question—Is the problem rightly stated? Where the Churches are agreed, can their opinion be accepted as in accord with reason and conscience? *Is* man a fallen creature? *Is* his brief life a probation whereby to determine his eternal state? *Is* this fair world indeed a stage whence exeunt the actors to hell or heaven for ever as meed of their performances? Creation, temptation, damnation—these are the orthodox summary of ordinary human lives, and our earth is just a convenient place where opportunity might be afforded the new-created soul to merit the eternal damnation which it was almost impossible to escape. I need not dwell upon this theory, because to you, my brethren, all the repulsiveness of it is familiar. Yet belief is still general—to those to whom ‘hell’ and ‘heaven’ are mere terms it is as easy as any other belief: to those who live apart from ‘the madding crowd,’ among earnest men and women bent upon the salvation of their souls as life's chiefest business, the doctrine is realised as awful indeed, but does not present itself as incredible; but to those who realise what it means and at the same time live in constant intercourse with the sinful and indifferent, to those who walk the streets conscious that most persons they meet will in the course of a few years be in a hell—to such it has always been a mystery to me how they can bring themselves to believe and go on believing so comfortably.

“‘It is not true!’ reason cried within me. ‘Men are not made for a bare chance of escaping hell.’ But the Church teaches that it is so, and if the Church in



this fundamental matter and of infinite moment be in error, how trust her in any respect? Who disbelieves in everlasting punishment disbelieves everything which depends upon authority for acceptance—he ceases *ipso facto* to be a Catholic.

“And the sacraments? God’s means of grace for the salvation and sanctification of perishing men. Do not they meet the difficulty? against every need do they not make ample provision, against every temptation supply defence? If the doom is terrible, has not the way of escape been made easy? But the sacraments themselves became a difficulty to me. If they saved hereafter, they saved not half, not a tenth of the race—and then they did not save here! How like Roman Catholics and Protestants were in their mortal lives! . . . And the further I considered the matter the clearer it became. In the Protestant churches it was always said that there were no real sacraments except baptism, and that so carelessly administered that in numerous cases it was null and void. There was certainly no priesthood, consequently no sacrifice, no communion, no Presence of Christ upon the altar; no confirmation bestowing the sevenfold gift of the Almighty Spirit upon the young, to help them through years of sorest conflict with temptation; no sacrament of penance, no healing grace of absolution. Of course all minor channels of grace were closed to them; sacramentals, as they are called, they did not know even by name; scapulars and relics, holy water and sacred shrines, rosaries and indulgences—these and the like with which every Catholic arms himself they are absolutely devoid of. Surely they must be inferior in devotion, in religion, in mere morality. The temptations of both are the same; those must succumb the oftener who are the more ill-provided for resistance.

“But nowhere did I find the facts correspond to the sacramental theory. A Catholic who had no experience of any but his own co-religionists, who was unread in

history of the past, and ignorant of the present state of nations and of churches, might honestly claim all godliness for his own Church. I knew too much of Protestants and of Catholics to do so ; I knew that without the Church, among those who had no sacraments, were as many good men and women, God-fearing and serving their generation faithfully and effectively, at least as many as there were within, helped and stimulated by all the Church's rites. The sacraments lost for me their mystic glory ; they became outward signs not of grace conferred but of the devout feelings of those who administered or participated in them."

Such were Hargrove's doubts as he described them years after they had done their work. But there is an immense difference between doubt in retrospect and doubt in being ; between doubt as described in the terms of the intellect and doubt as endured in the solitude of the spirit ; between doubt of which a man may speak openly before the world and doubt which he must keep silent, not daring even to avow it to himself, though he feels it eating into the most sensitive tissues of his soul. The first is a theme for discussion : the second is a dull, wearing *pain* breaking out at moments into fierce spasms of mental agony. "It is so bitter," says Dante, "that death is little more." This was the doubt that Hargrove knew as a living thing when he was a monk in Trinidad. His lips were sealed, and even his pen, as he wrote his private diary, refused to give its proper name to the force that was inwardly tearing him.

To this side of the matter we must now turn.



*To face page 225*



HARGROVE AS A DOMINICAN

## CHAPTER VI

### SECESSION FROM THE CHURCH OF ROME (1872)

THE diaries of 1871 and 1872 convey the impression of a struggle with constant physical misery and pain. He was overworked and chronically sleepless, taking bromide at the rate of 70 grains to the dose, and chloral when that proved useless. For days together he suffered "almost insupportable headaches" and went about his duties hardly knowing what he did. "Sung mass: in pain and trembling all over: my mind a vacancy." Clearly Trinidad was no place for him.

The state of his mind is only to be learnt by picking out the scattered memoranda which refer to it, easy to overlook in the mass of material surrounding them, but significant enough when collected together. They begin with a vague uneasiness; they end with an articulate denial which cannot be repressed.

January 8, 1871.—"My prevailing feeling here is utter discouragement."

January 10.—"I never was in so much want of a Retreat. Everything is gone, even essentials—*almost* gone."

January 12.—"Meditation in Chapter again on same subject—my sins."

January 18.—"Resolutions—(1) By way of little mortifications: never to miss meditation in the morning; to eat what is set before me; to use the carriages as little as possible. (2) To say the Rosary (third part) every day; and an hourly Ave Maria."

March 6.—“These few days are of the worst I have spent here : headache, body ache, heartache.”

August 12.—“Attempted to read a little *Paradise Lost*, but was so shocked with the Socinianism that I could not get on.”

August 21.—“I fear me there is little worth in my work, founded, as it is, on self-seeking and mere natural activity.”

May 28, 1872.—“Mass. God is found by love, and we may strain our eyes in the darkness all our life long and see little but our own imaginings.”

May 31.—“All the morning too tired to do anything.”

June 2.—“Preached on excuses for not frequenting the Sacraments.”

June 18.—“[Doubt]<sup>1</sup> on way to Hospital. In consequence turned back. [Next day] arrived at Hospital just in time to find [the man] dead—without sacraments—of drink.”

June 23.—“Reading *Middlemarch*.”

July 1-4.—“Read Mill on *Liberty* twice. Also Mill's *Logic : Grounds of Unbelief*.”

July 9.—“Preached on ‘That they may be all one’ . . . *First Doubts*.<sup>2</sup>”

July 12.—“Sick and suffering all day.”

July 13.—“No confession. Suffering.”

July 29.—“Reading Lecky's *European Morals* all day.”

<sup>1</sup> This word is uncertain. Significantly enough, the diary for these months abounds in hieroglyphic signs, most of which are unintelligible to me. There is one, however, of very frequent occurrence which, from study of the context, I interpret as indicating a fresh access of doubt. I have so interpreted it in the present instance.

<sup>2</sup> Many times before, as the evidence given amply proves, doubts had assailed him. But never before had he admitted in plain English that he entertained them. The distinction may mean little to the reader, but to a priest in his position it makes an enormous difference. It is the beginning of the end.

July 31—August 5.—Hieroglyphics.

August 6.—“Without confession and in doubt.”

August 20—24.—“No Mass or Office. Lecky's *History of Civilization*.”

August 11.—“This day for first time ceased saying Breviary after Matins.”

August 15.—“Preached to a dozen old women.”

August 26.—“Wrote to Joseph telling him of my impending return.”

August 29.—“*Incurred major excommunication.*”<sup>1</sup>

September 4.—Last Mass. Day of the great declaration, made to Father Thomas and communicated by him to Father O'Carroll”

September 9.—“Left Trinidad.”

September 11.—“St Lucia. Left Habit—*for ever?*—within one week of nine years from date of reception.”

To this evidence, pathetic enough in its very fragmentariness, I shall now add two letters written to Joseph Hargrove.

“PORT OF SPAIN,  
“August 26, 1872.

“DEAR BROTHER,—I am afraid my last letter must have somewhat puzzled and saddened you. I am indeed very much straitened; but, thank God, I inherit, I believe, a good deal of our father's elasticity of spirits, and I experience more and more power over sadness as life goes on. What help did sadness ever bring a man, what use can it be but to make things worse?

“I intended to return to England by this packet, but unfortunately it does not take passengers on account of some quarantine difficulties. If nothing occurs to hinder it, I shall leave by next packet, leaving this on the 9th and arriving at Southampton on the 28th. No doubt I shall have some days of great unpleasantness to encounter, when the time comes to make my

<sup>1</sup> He incurred it by allowing doubt to get the better of him.

determination known, and difficulties may be put in my way of the most serious kinds, especially about money ; but I think they will be prudent enough not to make an unnecessary row. At any rate, I hope it will soon be over. . . .

“Three years I have mixed in the world more than I ever did before, and I have seen enough. It is finished. My chains shall dangle about me and worry me but for a little while longer—fifteen days more, and I am off.”

“CAMBRIDGE,  
“*March 21, 1874.*”

“In 1862 I gave up all that was dear to me in the world to join the Church of Rome. I did this entirely of my own judgment, never having spoken to any member of that communion until my mind was made up as to the justice of its claim on my submission. My reasons for coming to this important conclusion were very simple. I argued thus :—

- “(1) There must needs be some religion revealed of God.
- “(2) Such a religion requires a living infallible teacher.
- “(3) The Church of Rome is the only body which can make a reasonable pretension to be this teacher. Therefore the Church of Rome is to be obeyed.

“I did my utmost at the time to overthrow an argument the conclusion from which seemed to me almost worse than death. I consulted those from whom I thought I was likely to meet with understanding of my difficulties and sympathy. Neither from their words nor my own thoughts did I obtain any solution of my difficulties. I tried then—basely enough, I confess—to shirk open acknowledgment of my convictions, to forget them, or put them aside. I am thankful to say that I did not succeed : my conscience overpowered my



affections and fears. In intellectual error I was honest and truthful.

“But I had sore difficulties in accepting the teaching of Rome as divine—above all, in accepting that revolting doctrine of everlasting punishment. I wrestled with them, and by sheer force of will repressed them. For ten years I succeeded in firmly believing in hell; other things were easy by comparison with it.

“In course of time the growth of my mind and the circumstances in which I was placed magnified this fearful difficulty, and forced upon my attention a new one—the sinfulness of subjecting reason to faith, the silliness of believing what I had not freely examined. Urged now by these twin forces, I turned back to re-examine my reasons for being a Roman Catholic. They were ever present to me and often urged by me from the pulpit. Was it possible that I had sacrificed everything to fallacious reasoning? In my diary of the 23rd of July 1872, I find the following note appended to a statement of my reasons such as I have given on the previous page: ‘After the lapse of ten years I return upon these propositions. I ask myself if I acted too hastily or passionately. I am compelled to answer. The second and third propositions are, after repeated examination, as indisputable to me now as ever. If the first be wrong—and it, no doubt, may be questioned,—then all is over.’

“I took courage and did question the existence of a divine revelation. I was really astounded to see how groundless had been the assumption on which so pregnant an argument had been made by me to rest. As a matter of fact, the immense majority of the race of men had no religion revealed to them, and yet I hastily concluded that such a revelation must exist, because I felt, or rather fancied I felt, a sore need of one. The hundred millions of Asia were left without supernatural guidance throughout thousands of years, but it could

not be that I should be left without it ! Now I argued back again :—

“ A religion which teaches everlasting punishment is not of God.

“ But the only religion which has any claim upon a reasonable man teaches this.

“ Therefore there is no religion ‘of God’—*i.e.* supernaturally revealed.

“ I ceased to be a Roman Catholic, and—in your sense of the word—a Christian. I landed in England as what you would call an infidel.”

From the first moment of his entry into the Roman Church, Hargrove was engaged in a hopeless fight against his own nature and destiny. Never was there a man less fitted to submit to authority ; and among those who *have* submitted there have been few, I imagine, to whom it can have cost an effort more unnatural or more certain to exhaust itself in course of time. That his submission was entire and genuine so long as it lasted there cannot be a doubt ; its genuineness is indeed proved by the fact that he left the Church without a moment’s hesitation when the truth had dawned upon him that he could no longer be her loyal son.

Among the particular doctrines against which his reason revolted, that of Eternal Punishment, it will be observed, had a prominent place. The point must not be unduly stressed, for the objections he found to this doctrine were only the *punctum saliens* of a multitude of doubts. He declares that always, even in the time of his greatest fervours, he had the utmost difficulty in believing it. In Trinidad he simply could not reconcile it with the facts that were brought under his daily observation : the thing was “ plumb impossible.” He knew, of course, that the Church of Rome does not damn unconditionally all those who are

opposed to her doctrine or outside her pale, but allows important reservations. Still, when all is said and done, she keeps the fires of hell burning and condemns to their everlasting torments *enough* of the children of men to make the doctrine unthinkable by him, in presence of the live facts which he is daily encountering in the hospital, the barracks, and the jail. He argued thus: "Here is a point where the Church has clearly overshot her mandate, gone too far, and in plain terms made a mistake. But if she is not infallible in this, how can she claim to be infallible in anything else? What if the very Incarnation itself, with the whole system of which it is the heart and living centre, its mysteries, its implications of doctrine, and its attendant Sacraments should be a misreading of the truth?"

He was fully aware that if his faith gave way at one point the whole structure would be in peril. Accordingly he fought his doubts by every means he could think of, "reading all the arguments in favour of eternal punishment and avoiding those on the other side." He was in the habit at this time of writing down in a book he kept for the purpose striking passages from the authors he was reading, especially those which seemed to confirm his faith. Among these fortifying passages I find the following from *The Life and Letters of F. W. Faber* :—

"On the last occasion but one on which he preached, fourth Sunday in Lent, 1863, he concluded with the following remarkable passage: 'The devil's worst and most fatal preparation for the coming of Antichrist is the weakening of men's belief in eternal punishment. Were they the last words I might ever say to you, nothing should I wish to say with more emphasis than this, that next to the thought of the Precious Blood, there is no thought in all your faith more precious or more needful to you than the thought of eternal punishment' (p. 503)."

His faith was dependent in the last resort on the "will-to-believe" which can indeed accomplish wonders—as we are learning afresh every day,—but has nevertheless certain natural limitations which prevent it from accomplishing everything. In Hargrove's case, and in that of many who resemble him, the will-to-believe was not a single act done once and for all, but a process of continual and agonising exertion to retain his hold on something which was always slipping from his grasp, and at the same time to keep back the tide of self-questionings that was threatening to overwhelm him. Such a state of things may be maintained for long, but cannot be maintained indefinitely, and the longer it is kept up the more complete will be the final catastrophe. The time is bound to come when the effort will have spent its force and the soul will drop down in exhaustion and despair.

That he should have been able to maintain the struggle for ten years may surely be reckoned a great achievement. But he was fighting a losing battle all the time, and he suffered intensely at every stage of its progress. He suffered when he entered the Church ; he suffered in the knowledge that he was destroying not only the happiness of his parents but their very lives ; he suffered in his relations with his brother ; he suffered in the attempt to deceive himself ; and, most of all, he suffered in the final discovery that he was indeed self-deceived. I know of no more piteous spectacle than that of a soul struggling against the current of its nature, with the feeble aid of texts and sophisms and other air-bladders for the drowning swimmer ; it is among the bitterest of all the labours which the sons of men inherit in a world where they have found out many inventions to their own hurt.

With this explanation we might rest content—that Hargrove's adventure into Romanism was against nature,

unpermitted, and doomed to failure from the start : doomed by the restlessness of his mind, for ever in search of new objects of interest, new lines of action ; doomed by his insatiate habit of self-questioning which the terrors of hell could not check ; doomed by his innate capacity for loving nature and man. Nay, if we consider this last alone, this craving for love, which is said by some to be the root of all human activity whatsoever, whether of soul, mind, or body, have we not here the key to the mystery ? For one so opulently gifted with human affections, so genial, so capable of loving whatever is beautiful in the world or worthy in man, it was flatly impossible "to hate father and mother, wife and children" for the sake of any Sacred Name that has ever been breathed under the heavens ; and a time came when he realised that he had deceived himself, and deceived himself horribly, in pretending that he had accomplished or ever could accomplish a perversion of nature so monstrous and unthinkable. There was an insurmountable disparity between the thing demanded and the *man* to whom the demand was addressed.

Of contributory causes there were many. He had continually before him the example of his old friend, Father Suffield (he had known him since 1864), who had become a Unitarian minister, shortly after Hargrove's arrival in Trinidad. I am unable to trace any correspondence between the two during the Trinidad period, and think it unlikely that any took place. "You have perhaps seen in the papers," writes Hargrove to his brother (October 9, 1870), "notice of the apostasy of a distinguished English member of our Order. . . . He has become a Unitarian, and so far I agree with him most thoroughly that I can see no logical standing-point between Ultramontanism, as they call it, and the denial of Christianity." Then follows a defence of the Catholic position in which Suffield is roundly condemned.

Nevertheless the fact of his old friend's secession was there to be pondered. No doubt the thought of it would recur at dangerous moments, with what subtle suggestions we can well imagine. In a later letter (1874) he again refers to the matter and confesses the force of Suffield's example so far as his own *secession* was concerned, but adding that Suffield had had very little to do with his subsequent movement into Unitarianism. "His example," he says, "was of great importance to me in shaking my firm adherence to the Church of Rome. Beyond that he has influenced me very little."

Note again the scope of his reading at this time. He gives at the end of his diary for 1872 two lists of "books read"—the first of books read at Santa Sabina and Carpentras, and they are exclusively on theology and devotion; the second of books read at Trinidad, and not one book of theology or devotion is named. The second list indeed cannot be complete; and yet it is remarkable that the novels of George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë, Kingsley, and Scott, the poems of M. Arnold, the works of Lecky and Mill should be picked out for memoranda, while his devotional reading is omitted altogether.

Of the books named I think it was Mill *On Liberty* that influenced him most; though the rest must have been considerably disturbing to a man in his condition of mind. Many years later (1901) he thus refers to the influence of Mill in a letter to his son, then an undergraduate at Cambridge: "I thought once of writing to [Mill] to tell him how much I was indebted to him for his treatise *On Liberty*, which went far to help me out of the Church of Rome." Had he, one wonders, in reading this book, made up his mind beforehand "not to yield assent for one moment nor even doubt, however conclusive an argument hostile to the Faith may appear to be"? Or

was it the reading of the book which first convinced him that such a rule was nothing less than a demand for intellectual suicide?

When once the resolution to secede had been taken, and the final "No" shouted to the sad waters, Hargrove acted with the utmost promptitude. It is entirely characteristic of the man that he took no advice. He fought his battle alone, and I cannot believe that it would have been otherwise even if more capable advisers had been at hand. His purpose was to involve no man in responsibility for what he was doing, to get away silently and unnoticed, to avoid theatricality and scandal, and to cause the minimum of distress to his fellow-priests and to his flock. "Indeed," wrote one of the latter, "you are entitled to our gratitude and that of all true Catholics for having acted with so much discretion when once you had resolved to leave the Church. The scandal which would have ensued had you broken off openly whilst in the Colony would have been fearful, and you were quite right in saying that once gone we should all say you were right [in acting as you have done]. There has not been much gossip about you."

To his superiors he seems to have given no reason save the curt one of sheer "inability to believe." "Your arguments, all of which I know by heart, may be convincing; but to *me*, Charles Hargrove, they carry no conviction. I *cannot* believe; and there is the end of it. Farewell."

Of the fatherly remonstrances which met this avowal there is no written record. But I remember him telling me that one of his superiors spoke to the following effect: "Well, you *may be* right. But your position requires you to admit that *we* may be right also; in which case *you* will be wrong. If you are right and we wrong, you will never know it for certain, and will gain nothing by leaving us.

If, on the contrary, we are right and you wrong, you will go to hell. Act therefore like a sensible man, and remain what you are." An ingenious argument, hardly to be parried by a counter-stroke, but failing to take account of the salient fact, which was that for Hargrove, as he then was, hell had ceased to be an operative terror.

The date of the "great declaration"—inability to believe—is, as we have seen, September 4. It was made at 11 A.M., the "last mass" having been said, perfunctorily enough, we may well believe, in the earlier hours. On September 9 he leaves Trinidad, accompanied to the water's edge by Fathers O'Carroll, Thomas, Esteva, by Mrs Scott, Mrs O'Connor, Mrs Tavenot, and one or two other friends.

It was all over. With a suddenness that must have been almost as startling to himself as to the bewildered group on the quay-side, the tie was severed which bound him to safety for this world and for the next. He had "dropped the pilot" who, for ten years, had steered his doubting soul through the shoal-strewn waters. Henceforward he was to find his way as best he could, with none to guide him but his own conscience and the stars. It was a tremendous change—hardly less so than if a man were to be suddenly launched into a world where the law of gravitation was suspended. He had not trifled with the Church of Rome. He had absorbed her teachings into the marrow of his bones. The severance from her protecting care cut down to the roots of his life, and there is many a passage in the diaries of the next two years in which one may hear him moaning like a child which has lost its mother. None knew better than he the risks he was running—he had them all by rote. And he was humanly as well as religiously desolate—going back to a world where there was not a soul on whose love he could surely count. What sinkings of heart may have visited him in the night watches we know



not ; but who can doubt that when he contrasted his past with his present state, the sense of his loneliness in the midst of the great waters must have weighed upon him like a garment of lead ? Such a change can be understood only by those who have passed through it. To the external observer it may seem enough to say that here was a soul that had broken its fetters. We may even picture him “rejoicing in his new-found freedom.” And so, in moments of exhilaration, he did. But there were other moments when it seemed to Hargrove himself, not that he had broken his fetters, but that he had cut his moorings and drifted helplessly out to sea. And not only then, but for years afterwards there was a force at work within him which pulled him back, in sentiment if not in will, to the safe anchorage he had left for ever, and knew that he had left for ever, as the shores of Trinidad faded in the distance and finally sank out of sight beneath the waters of the circumambient deep.

Needless to say that when the truth became fully known there was consternation, horror, and even incredulity among his friends at Port of Spain. At the moment of his departure it was only his fellow-priests, and apparently not all of them, who understood what was happening ; the others thought he was merely leaving for England. I have before me letters from his superior, Father O’Carroll, and from several members of his flock. Father O’Carroll simply cannot understand. The thing is uncalled-for, unintelligible, out of the order of nature, an outrage to religion, and opposed to the A B C of reason and common sense. ‘How can a sensible man be anything but a Catholic ? For my part, I have never entertained the faintest shadow of a doubt concerning our Holy Faith. A fit of madness ; a brain-storm ; a trick by Satan, soon to spend its force. Surely you will come back !’ Such is the tenor of it.

The good father adds a testimonial: "I certify that Brother Jerome Hargrove has been under my administration for three years, and I know nothing against his moral character." "I think it right to tell you that not a single unkind word was spoken of you by any of the fathers. Great was their astonishment and great their pity for you—that is all. . . . What you have done has been a great shock and a great grief to your friends. Many of them have been praying for you, and find it hard to believe that you have given up the Church."

Among the letters from his flock there is one written, I think, in a passion of sorrow. "Vous rappelez vous," the writer asks, "que vous me disiez que quand vous n'aviez pas de foi vous étiez d'une affreuse tristesse; mais qu'on vous appelait 'le novice qui rit toujours,' après que vous aviez trouvé la foi; que vous voudriez vous retrouver dans ce cher Couvent où vous suiviez votre règle à la lettre, où vous embrassiez les murs de votre cellule, tellement vous étiez heureux?" "Vous rappelez vous" of a score of such-like sayings and of incidents to match—how, for example, when her husband was in trouble, "vous avez béni deux médailles pour lui, ici sur la galérie"; how he bore a cross tattooed on his arm—"que comptez vous de faire de cette croix bleu? Elle, non plus, ne peut pas s'effacer, ne peut aller qu'au Ciel, *ailleurs* on ne s'en veut pas—ainsi changez de route." "Vous m'avez fait trop de bien pour que je vous oublie jamais." "Je vous revois à l'autel, votre recueillement si grand, que je disais à mon mari que rien de vous voir inspirait la piété, et vous n'y croyez plus. . . . Mon cœur déborde, je souffre trop."

To this group of letters there is a note appended in Hargrove's hand, written a few months after leaving Trinidad: "All in the same strain; astonishment, indignation, affection, esteem, making up a letter painful enough to read

for the sake of the writers. And I to whom it is all written am *an undergraduate*<sup>1</sup> with scarcely a friend, certainly not with one to look up to me. I feel the humiliation now more than ever since I left Trinidad . . . it is absurd to pretend indifference. *I am thankful for the witness, which I know to be true, that while I did believe I acted up to my faith with all my heart.*"

What were the thoughts of Joseph Hargrove when, without a word of warning or explanation, and all the signs were pointing in the opposite direction, he read the sudden news that his brother had renounced the Church of Rome for ever? Did he remember their father's prophecy, "He will come out as fast as he went in"?

He seems to have acted with reserve, which Charles interpreted—whether rightly or wrongly is difficult to judge—as coldness. His response must have been exiguous, for on November 2, about three weeks after arriving in England, I find Charles beginning a letter with these words, "Since I last wrote I have received from you two postal cards, an annotated letter, and the carpet-bag." On November 27, however, comes a discourse of fifteen pages. A discourse it properly is, and though it betrays much theological solicitude, I cannot say that it strikes me as strongly marked by brotherly affection. "[The matter] is on my heart before the Lord. I very much feel for your perplexity, and desire to help you, but . . . the best work your friends can do is to earnestly pray that your soul may be brought into direct communion with God." Then follow warnings against the "wisdom of this world." Again, "You speak of waiting on the Lord. But is it not most necessary to see that there is nothing to hinder the Lord from answering our prayers? Ten or twelve years

<sup>1</sup> He had then returned to Cambridge, aged thirty-two, and become an "unattached" undergraduate. The contrast is between the undergraduate and the priest.

ago you rejected the Lord's guidance and sought it of those who reject Him. Your life since then has given offence and sorrow to the Lord's people. . . . My special fear for you is lest when you come to inquire of the Lord you should prevent Him from answering you, put any stumbling-block in the way by not acknowledging your past error. . . . I may be mistaken in this—many would say that this letter was cold, unfeeling, ill-judged. . . .”

Which is precisely what Charles himself felt it to be. His brother had told him nothing that he had not heard a thousand times. He knew by heart the whole list of dangers, stumbling-blocks, temptations, pitfalls, adversaries, that souls in search of certitude and peace set themselves to overcome. He had fought against them all with wrestlings innumerable, with prayers and fastings, and self-immolations, prolonged to extremities of effort and agony of which Joseph, sincere a man as he was, knew but little. And now he was beaten to his knees, wounded, bleeding, humiliated, broken, and almost alone in the world. Of what worth to him, the victim of disillusion, was this new repetition of the formulæ so often tried and so often found wanting? Surely it was something quite other than this that he expected from a brother's love. But “he had made his bed, and he must lie on it.”

Very different must have been his feelings on receiving the following letter, which I have found carefully preserved among his papers, the very envelope in which it was enclosed being treasured as a sacred thing. The writer of it was a French Dominican priest—his senior, I imagine, in one of the convents where he had spent his noviciate.

“*Omnia propter Jesum per Mariam.*”

“MY VERY DEAR CHILD IN OUR LORD,—May the grace of Jesus and the blessing of His Most Holy Mother be with you for ever !

“You will not wonder at my writing to you. *Æmulator enim vos Dei æmulatione.* I want to tell you that, in spite of all events, I am, and will remain unto death, your most humble and affectionate servant in Christ. Wherever you may be in this world, you must reckon upon me to help you with all my strength to recover what you have lost. I do not cease praying our Blessed Saviour to give you the good impression to come and join me here. The Retreat of St Mary Magdalene is not far from here, and there we could easily go together and, with the grace of God, put everything right about your dear soul. Nobody knows that I am writing to you. May the Sacred Heart of Jesus unite again our hearts as before in the Holy bonds of faith and charity.—In any case believe me always, yours most lovingly in our Blessed Lord,  
 “FR. JOSEPH ANTONIUS DOUSSOT.”

His secession attracted little public notice. A few lines in the *Daily News* gave a bare announcement of it, but wrongly attributed the cause to his rejection of the recent dogma of Papal Infallibility. This he resented, as he did all explanations which represented him as rejecting particular doctrines of Rome. His faith, so long as it lasted, was based on his acceptance of the Divine Authority of the Church. That present, there was no question of the truth of particular doctrines. When it went, everything else went with it; the linch-pin was out, and the whole equipage collapsed.

He had achieved his object. By a signal act of valour, and at the cost of intense suffering, he had rid his soul of what, had he longer entertained it, would have been to him a lie; and never again would he suffer himself to be entangled in the net from which he had escaped. He had done this, as he intended, without noise, without egotism, and with the minimum of scandal to the Church he had

loved so long, and which he never ceased to honour, remembering that he had loved it once.

The tongues of malice, usually active in these matters, were silent. So far as I can gather, his secession was never attributed to motives other than those which had actually caused it. Painful as his position was, the draught he was appointed to drink was unembittered by calumny. He went forth alone, without fear, without shame, and, it must be added, without hope. But he was free.

“How much it cost me [to become a Roman Catholic],” he said to the Leeds Unitarians in 1876,<sup>1</sup> “I need not tell you, but I will venture to say that I cannot look back without a certain wonder at the courage to begin and the fortitude to persevere with which I was then gifted. I have been since exhorted to repent and be ashamed of my error. It was a mistake ; greater men than I have made greater ones ; I have suffered for it and have no right to complain, but while I to some extent regret it, in no way can I regard it as a disgrace or a sin. Ten years I spent in the Church of Rome ; they are years on which I can never look back without a feeling of love and thankfulness. I believe that I understand more than most Englishmen can what the real evils of the system are ; but, unless duty forces it upon us, surely it is better to speak respectfully and tenderly of the home which has sheltered us for years.”

<sup>1</sup> Address to the Mill Hill Congregation on taking up his ministry. Printed in the *Inquirer* for December 30, 1876.

## CHAPTER VII

ADRIFT (1872-1875)

THERE was no period in Hargrove's life, not even during the stormiest part of it, when piety failed him. The current of his nature was towards the things of the spirit, and in that respect the blows of fate, the vicissitudes of fortune, the shocks of disillusion, the shipwreck of formal belief, with all their consequent confusions of the intellect, left him unchanged. Faith might assume this form or that—nay, it might become utterly formless and inexpressible in human speech,—but the essence of it, which is a certain impulse of the soul towards that which is unseen and eternal, never ceased to determine the main path of his pilgrimage. The place which destiny had assigned was by the altar; it was written on his forehead that he was born to be the exponent of a sacrifice whether of himself or of Another, the spokesman and minister of a God, known or unknown as the case might be.

It is only when the loss or the gain of belief means loss or gain in the spirit of *reverence* that men fall or rise in the moral scale. But, so far as I can observe, the springs of reverence in Hargrove's nature were undisturbed by his theological vicissitudes. He grew after his kind, as all men do; but one looks in vain for any change in the outward man to correspond with the revolutions and catastrophes of his belief. In all matters of duty to his fellow-men, in dealing with their claims on his affection or his service, in

speaking the truth, in the punctual performance of promises, and in general regard to charity and good manners, there is no discernible difference between Hargrove as Plymouth Brother, as Catholic priest, as sceptic, as Unitarian. Whence, perhaps, we may draw the lesson not to exaggerate the importance of these differences, but to look more kindly on them all, with a deeper pity for those who are involved in the conflicts which arise out of their oppositions.

And yet in spite of the fact that piety, which is another name for the Love of Truth, was at that moment the dominant force, Hargrove did there and then resolve to make a clean cut from the clerical profession—a resolve destined not to be kept, like so many others which had gone before. The clerical profession seemed to him at that moment beset with great dangers to a lover of truth. With the hideous memories of past misadventures crowding upon him, his longing was for some way of life where his conversation might reduce itself to the simple form of “Yea, yea ; nay, nay.” I know not what refuges for the destitute he may have passed under review. His diaries and letters say nothing about “literature,” “journalism,” “a private secretaryship,” nor of the other resources in that line which are wont to offer vague glimmers of hope to broken, stranded, and purposeless men. Nor does he mention “social service,” which in these days has become a recognised employment for the spiritually disillusioned. Brushing all these on one side, or neglecting them altogether, he makes up his mind “quite definitely” to devote himself to the “study and practice of medicine,” which had been the profession of his grandfather. He will return to Cambridge, where he still has some friends not likely, even under these altered circumstances, to turn their backs upon him ; he will enrol himself as an unattached undergraduate ; will take his degree ; and, being no longer



qualified to save men's souls, will devote the rest of his life to healing their bodies. All this, resolved and "finally" determined upon as he paces the deck of the steamer that bears him from Trinidad, he proceeds to carry out decisively the moment he lands in England. We note incidentally that during the voyage he has changed into lay garments, fished out from some old "carpet-bag" that seems to have followed him to the West Indies—and not, we may suppose, in the latest fashion; he has wondered to see himself in the glass "with a collar and tie"; and has had some perplexities about his "tonsure," which, in spite of judicious combings and clippings of adjacent parts, or perhaps in consequence thereof, causes him to be suspected by the ship's barber as having known the inside of a prison—which indeed was true in a deeper sense than the ship's barber was aware of.

There were certain old friends of his father's named Learmonth, Plymouth Brethren and people of substance, who, hearing that he might be straitened for lack of funds, generously offered him £100 a year to help in the prosecution of his medical studies. This offer Hargrove at first refused, as the words in which it was made expressed a hope that the money might further his return "to the Lord's service." He frankly declared that such an issue, in the sense the Learmonths intended, was wholly out of the question. Their reply was that they regarded the money as given to Christ, leaving it wholly in His hands to determine the course of events. On this the money was accepted. On their part it was a beautiful action, done at a moment when human kindness was worth more to Hargrove than anything else in the world.

We hear of sundry small legacies, scraps of reversionary interest under an aunt's or a grandmother's will, which, after much filling in of documents and attendance at lawyers'

offices, would provide him with two or three hundred pounds. Some of these moneys seem to have been already deposited in the keeping of Dominicans, and were by them returned on demand being made. In addition to which there was the £1000 under his father's will to which he became entitled on his renouncing "the errors of the Church of Rome." This he did not get possession of till later. Had his father foreseen that his elder son's secession from Rome would be followed by his entry into the Unitarian ministry, it is certain that this £1000 would never have fallen to the share of Charles, for the father's horror of Unitarianism was greater even than his horror of Rome. Here is the formal renunciation executed as the condition of his becoming entitled to the bequest :—

"I, Charles Hargrove, formerly a student of Emmanuel College, in the University of Cambridge, and afterwards ordained a priest in the Roman Catholic Church, do hereby solemnly declare that I renounce the errors of the Church of Rome, and particularly the twelve last articles added to the Nicene Creed in the Creed commonly called the Creed of Pope Pius IV, and that I have thoroughly and entirely separated myself from its communion ; and I hereby further declare that in separating myself from the communion of the said Church I communicated the fact of my having done so to my superior in the said Church on the fourth day of September last.

"Witness my hand this 22nd day of January 1873."

We have, then, to picture him established in lodgings at 12 Tennis Court Road, Cambridge, and enrolled as a student of medicine. His mornings are spent in dissecting-rooms, museums, botanical theatres, and in attending the lectures connected therewith. We see him making a brave effort to concentrate his mind on these uncongenial studies, and

even beginning after a time to find them "interesting." To his fellow-undergraduates he was, as he soon came to realise, a subject of much speculation; at least ten years older than most of them, and known to have had a past out of the ordinary. He was not wanting in friends, most of them, I notice, having some sort of theological complexion, who found him a contributor of no mean value to any discussion, whether public or private, when matters theological were in debate. He does, in fact, inform his brother that though his mornings are duly devoted to anatomy, his evenings are reserved for the Greek Testament, and that the "evenings" in which he is so engaged are often prolonged into the small hours of the morning. It is not difficult to discern which way the wind is blowing.

In his vacations he travels freely, to London often, to Ireland (where relatives were still living), to the Lakes, and to numerous towns and villages up and down the country where friendly rectors are anxious to have a talk with him, either for their good or his own. I find him paying frequent visits to Nottingham, drawn thither by his brother Joseph, who is now curate at Gedling. In this church of Gedling, round which Hargrove hovered a good deal, there was much preaching of evangelical theology, "sending me away from the church," he says, "less disposed to the Christian religion than when I entered it. Verily, sitting under this bad theology I thought often of the Bishop of Derry's 'last remnant of the sufferings of the early Christians.'"

He had many such experiences; indeed, they seem to have occurred in one form or another whenever he entered the doors of the church or "lunched" with a rector, or had an interview with a bishop, like Christopher Wordsworth, or with a luminary, like Dr Vaughan, or with an old friend like Kingsley, "whose defence of Christianity struck me as very poor." In the voluminous diary for 1873 he

records his disappointments at these encounters, from which he hoped so much and gained so little. Two entries may serve as samples of all the rest :—

“After dinner we three [Hargrove, rector, and curate] sat smoking, D. and J. talking, especially the former till twelve o’clock. His pious evangelical talk set me at once looking sorrowfully Romewards, and Trinidad was the subject of my dreams during a rather restless night. There is so much cant mixed up with Protestant piety. So rare is a complete unison of theory and practice among them. R. C.’s do aim at following the counsels of our Lord, the dictates of perfect charity ; do give up possessions, family, their own will, to serve God and His poor only. Protestants do not.”

Or, again :—

“I had intended to take the Sacrament in church this morning (Easter Day). But when I thought of the Nicene Creed, which I would have to recite, I turned away from the church door.”

On this last occasion he was visiting the Rev. George Body at Kirby Misperton in response to a very loving invitation. “Oh you do not know,” Body had written, “how I revel in the thought of our reunion.”

All forms of Church doctrine he tried in turn, the High, the Broad, the Low ; always on the lookout for some guide or helper in his bewilderment, but not looking further for the present than the Church of England ; seeking interviews, making long journeys that he might walk for half an hour with a bishop in his garden, or pour out his doubts to a Doctor of Divinity in his study ; but though he found much kindness everywhere, he found no light anywhere. The truth was that he knew too much to be easily influenced or impressed, and his brother Joseph was probably right

in declaring, as he frequently did, that "the case was beyond the reach of human methods."

His mind swung backwards and forwards like a pendulum. In the following we see him on the point of joining the Church of England :—

"Met Canon Liddon at St Paul's after evensong, and walked with him along the embankment past the Houses of Parliament and back, and then took a hasty dinner with him.

"I opened to him all my mind, even my late discoveries about the reasons of my 'apostasy.' Of course I was soon under his influence, and well-nigh persuaded to become a Christian and Catholic. The more so as the points he most dealt with were those which have most struck myself, and which I was therefore best prepared to appreciate : the historic character of Christianity ; the overwhelming evidence for the Resurrection ; the moral effects of faith in Christ.

"In regard to unity, he urged the facts of the Eastern Church as strongly militant against the claims of Rome—its missionary enterprise, its antiquity, its numbers—and said that he had himself thought, if driven from Anglicanism, rather to join it than Rome."

The following letter to Canon Body shows the rebound of his mind from the point he had reached in the interview with Liddon :—

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—This is a selfish letter written for my sake, not yours. I have come here under a sense of duty, not thinking it right to neglect my many relations in Ireland ; but though it is not yet a week I have been here, I am utterly wearied and disgusted, but cannot yet get away. Can you guess at what ? Surely, yes—Irish Protestantism, missions of ignorant heretics to Roman Catholics, at the worst better instructed than themselves ; lies, calumnies,

misrepresentations, bigotry, narrowness everywhere. If the Inquisition could get power over me, prison and torture would be the means prescribed for my 'conversion'; but I fancy a much surer means would be to condemn me to live among Dublin Protestants. I suppose in many parts of the country the contrast of the two religions is less glaring, but here it presents itself to me as all ugliness, coarseness, nakedness and repulsiveness on one side, and on the other beauty, gentleness, majesty, and life—and freedom of thought.

"Verily, this narrow Calvinism allows a man no room for an opinion at all. But to-day I met an Irish clergyman scoffing at Mr Gladstone's piety because his prayers were made in 'a Ritualistic church.' Another maintained that at Cambridge nineteen men out of twenty were atheists. Another was proposing to challenge Ritualists to a discussion. When asked who would be the judge, he replied at once, 'We want no judge but the Word of God'; and then flattered his little soul with the remark, 'But they'd never meet us, they'd take good care of that'—I hope they would, and not cast their pearls before swine. Did I follow feeling rather than reason and conscience, I would this moment seek absolution and reunion with the Church of Rome. It is such men as you and Liddon, men whom these people call Papists, that restrain me in great measure from doing so—or at least that would be almost the only restraint on my so acting were I a believer in their own Bible. Would to God that I were! that I might join you in heart and work. But in truth—I say it with sadness, and it will sadden you, dear brother, and is all the sadder to me on that account—I am not one step nearer to faith than I was a year ago. To holding with firm faith the foundations of Christianity I see countless difficulties. But should I come to hold them all, where do I find myself, but in a city of endless confusion, a camp where 'the Lord has set every man's sword against his fellow,'

where the common greeting is, 'We have wished you ill luck in the name of the Lord'?

"When I am with Catholics or Theists I am at peace, but with such people as these I am driven to and fro between Ultramontaniam and hatred of religion.

"Some steady intellectual work not immediately connected with religion is a necessity for me at present. The knowledge of medicine is of all the most useful to a Christian priest among the poor, such as I hope I shall be some day.—Yours ever most lovingly,  
"C. H."

There is no doubt that great pressure was brought upon him at this time to enter the service of the Church of England; openings were found, and inducements were offered. As to the persons concerned in this, I have only the memory of Hargrove's conversations to guide me, and it is therefore right that their names should be withheld. They were persons then prominent in the Church, and there was a bishop among them. To the latter's assurance that "the Church offered no obstacles to his believing in Transubstantiation" Hargrove's reply was, "Ah, but I want to go much deeper than that."

In Charles Kingsley, to whom he wrote a full account of his difficulties, he found an adviser of a different type.

"I should never have advised you or any man," wrote Kingsley, "to leave the Church of Rome as long as you felt that you could be a pious, virtuous, and honest man in it. But now that God has made the last of those three conditions impossible for you, I tell you, go in God's name—with continual prayer for light—whithersoever He shall lead you. But do not, do not, in leaving her, leave in the least those old orthodox Creeds which she still holds, and by which she will at last be purified and saved—at least, so runs my dream. If I have helped to teach you that they

are compatible with intellectual honesty and freedom, and therefore with sound science, happy shall I be.

“But do not think that your struggles are past. Those of a true seeker for light can only end with the grave—if even then. Only—in due time you shall reap, if you faint not.”

When a man of thirty-three has lost hold of the purpose which has dominated his life for ten years he will not easily find another; the odds are many to one that he will *drift* for the rest of his days. And even if another be offered him, exactly suited to his talents, he will hesitate before closing with it. His experience with the first has weakened his confidence in himself, and he will seem in his own eyes incapable of sustaining any purpose whatsoever. No wonder, then, that Hargrove presents for the time being the spectacle of a purposeless soul. But, unlike many who are in that condition, he found it intolerable. The question *quid faciam* allowed him no rest. He tried to solve it, as many try, by self-study; would find out precisely the kind of man he was, deduce thence the work he was fitted to do in the world, and get to business accordingly. Needless to say, he had no success. Here is one of his self-measurements, accurate as far as it goes, and just going far enough to leave the main question—*quid faciam*—more unanswerable than ever.

“I fancy I am like a block of really precious marble which has neither been left in the original rough beauty, nor been sculptured into noble form, nor into any form at all. . . . I have talent most certainly, of a really high order and of a versatile kind. I have an earnestness and generosity that would make me greedy of sacrifice to a cause in which I wholly believed. But I believe thoroughly in no cause and have no motive sufficiently powerful to apply myself to anything” (May 15, 1873).



For two years his life was passed in this manner. In his diaries and letters, which abound in discussions of matters religious, I discern from time to time brief and perfunctory indications that the study of medicine is still going on. "It is," he says, "a moral duty to go on with it," though for what reason is not clear, for his heart is not in the study, and his intellect is preoccupied with other things. Shortly after settling down to work at Cambridge in 1872, he informs Joseph that though "one must do something for a living," and though medicine is the only means he knows of to that end, none the less he is wholly unable "to free himself from the *substance* of his vows" as a man dedicated to the service of God. "Those were years of error, but years of purity and love, and I have neither sorrow nor shame to manifest for them." He feels, however, that his new profession is not so far from his old one (for did not Christ go about healing the sick?); and if by God's grace the light of faith should come back to him, might he not, in his intimacies with the suffering, still exercise the function of a minister of things divine? Six weeks afterwards "he has now practically resolved to give up medicine."

Mind and will are hopelessly confused, wandering about in a wilderness of "buts." In each succeeding letter there is some new plan or the return to a plan abandoned the week before; and often the end of the letter contradicts the beginning. By no manner of means can he persuade himself to cast aside his priestly character *in toto*—*but* "he cannot settle his beliefs." They must be settled—*but* "is he to spend the whole of his life in trying to settle them?" It is clear that sooner or later he will have to give up his medical studies—*but* it is equally clear that duty requires him to go on with them. Has "almost" made up his mind to become a curate and "take the ordinarily accepted

Creed for granted till I can settle its difficulties"—*but* he has been mentioned as candidate for a Librarianship, "and my views are so changed that I should leap at it." He writes to an eminent official in India, asking about prospects in that country; he fills up a form for a scholastic appointment—answering the question "What is your religion?" by a note of interrogation; which done, the form is folded up, and, on second thoughts, *not* posted. "At the present time," he writes in his diary for January 18, 1873, "I do not really *believe anything*, not even the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. I do not *disbelieve* these things, *but*<sup>1</sup> my mind is utterly undetermined, so that I am carried hither and thither with every wind of doctrine. *Only* in regard to the doctrines of the Church of England, I hope they may be true, I cling to them, and in many respects act as if I believed them; I could not say I renounce them, *but*, etc., etc., etc."

"I have formally renounced the Church of Rome . . . and her doctrines (January 22), believing that she is of all Christian Churches the most venerable, logical, effective. . . . Have I then abandoned God? Nay, for His sake I have abandoned all that hindered my belief in Him. . . . I know Him not, I confess, *but* if what I feel to be best and noblest in myself and others is not a faint picture of Him, a revelation proved by the universal conscience better than by any signs or prodigies, I can trust no more sense or instinct or intellect—the highest is but delusion, and who, then, will trust at all? My God, my Father, unknown and beloved, I believe in Thee, I hope in Thee, I love Thee; pardon my sins."

Close following upon this entry is the first indication I have been able to find that Hargrove, in his search for

<sup>1</sup> Italics mine.

light, had ever bethought him of the great leader of the English Unitarians. On January 24 he is in London, and briefly records that he called on James Martineau, who "expressed great satisfaction at my still maintaining a high opinion of the Old Roman Catholic Church"—with which meagre report we must rest content for our knowledge of what must have been an important interview, as all interviews with James Martineau were, the bare vision of the man being enough to leave upon the visitor impressions he was not likely to forget. Afterwards he visits Samuel Sharpe, also a Unitarian, whose "whole occupation is the study of the Bible," and meets at his house "Mr Spears, Secretary to the Unitarian Association." "Mr Sharpe pressed me much to take up the Unitarian ministry, but I objected: first, my undecided views; second, that I see no clear duty to make so great a sacrifice"—which is the first evidence we have of the Unitarian ministry having entered into the medley of Hargrove's plans and projects. It is noteworthy that he rejected it offhand; though what the "sacrifice" referred to may be is by no means clear: enough that then and there he found the proposition too costly to be attractive. Next day he goes to the offices of the Unitarian Association aforesaid, and, taking up one book after another as he waits in the office, comes to the conclusion that there is "no system which bears so evidently on its face the marks of delusion," congratulating himself, no doubt, on having so decisively turned down Mr Samuel Sharpe's proposal of the evening before. What "system" he means is again obscure, but I take it from the context, in which the phrase "*orthodox* Unitarianism" occurs several times, that the condemnation is intended to have a somewhat limited application—to that Unitarianism, namely, which followed the teaching of Channing.

Thence to his old friend Mr Suffield, once a member of the Dominican Order, now apostate like himself, and Unitarian minister at Croydon. Encouraged by Mr Suffield, he preaches in that gentleman's pulpit, "for the first time since I left the Church of Rome," and next night addresses a working men's club, discovering to his surprise "that he is a thorough radical." After which another visit to Mr Sharpe, to learn more about the Unitarian view of the Bible; and to Harrow, to see Kingsley, but "found only his daughter, with whom I had an interesting conversation."

Altogether a fateful expedition, the beginning of a new turning-point in his pilgrimage, though not recognised as such at the time, not at least by him. Its significance, however, did not escape the anxious watch of his brother, who, when the visits to Croydon became more frequent and rumours were current that Charles had been lifting up his voice in Mr Suffield's tabernacle, could no longer refrain from expostulation. "It seems a dreadful reverse," he writes on March 20, 1874, "that you should spend [Easter] in company of those who deny our Lord. You speak of desiring our father's counsel, but think how he would shudder to see you seeking counsel from such. I have often thought of the one thing which seemed to his dying eye to be doctrine on which there could be no parley or doubt—that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. And surely if you honour or love his memory, you will think his words worth weighing. . . . I do feel alarmed and dismayed to think of your being so much in company with those who reject the only Name in which salvation is promised." And again, a week later, "Above all, let me entreat and beseech you not to fall into that sin which indeed may not be in your thoughts, but which has been terribly present to mine, not to lift up your voice in any place where the blessed Lord is disowned and dishonoured.

. . . As to the question about your coming here, I am in a difficulty. . . . I am thinking of others over whom I am bound to watch. . . . There is need of caution when duty towards God and natural affection seem to draw in opposite directions." This was Hargrove's first experience, to be followed by many of the same kind in later life, of what it meant to be suspected of the Unitarian taint. His brother's door was closed against him. In this, as in all his letters to Charles which deal with religious matters, Joseph took the most certain means he could have found for driving his elder brother still further along the path from which he was trying to draw him back.

He had many friends among the clergy of the Church of England, of whom the most intimate and the most beloved was the Rev., afterwards Canon, George Body. The days he spent with Body were almost the only bright spots in his life at this time, and were always marked as red-letter days in his diary. Here is a characteristic entry on his birthday, July 4, 1873, which the two men had spent together :—

"Dear Body returned. My heart fixes passionately on every friendship, because it longs for love and trust and occasion of sacrifice—and had it all and has lost it all. I am often sighing, and at moments silent and dejected. They think me in love, and so I am, but not as they imagine or can conceive. In love with a cause, noble and exacting, a phantom form, which would accept me and for which I might live and die. A fire consumes within me, and for want of fuel consumes my heart's self . . . *Quid faciam?* I only trust that neither interest nor feeling will turn me aside from entire devotion to the truth."

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE WIND RISES

IN this uproar of contending elements the one clear voice is that of his religious nature crying for deliverance. He was beset by two "inabilities": on the one hand was the "inability to believe"; on the other the "inability *not* to believe"; the one pushing him towards various secular employments—librarianships at which "he would leap," fictions of medical study, airy plans of "work in India," and such-like; the other reiterating the resolution that, come what may, he cannot abandon "the substance of his vows," which consecrates him to the service of God. Of these two "inabilities" the latter unquestionably was the stronger. For it was not a mere negative—a thing in which no strength can be. It was a "yea" disguised as a "nay," an insistent positive, a hunger of the soul, denying the inadequate forms that were offered for its expression, but itself by no means to be denied. Unbelief, if you will, but unbelief fully conscious of itself, utterly discontented with itself, yes, hating itself with an implacable hatred—a very different thing from the cold unbelief of the unawakened soul. Out of "unbelief," such as Hargrove's was in these days, many great "beliefs" have had their origin.

That he himself, even then, was aware of this seems to me to be indicated by a memorandum on a fly-leaf of one of his diaries. Walking one day in the grounds of Newstead Abbey, among the tombs of monks and friars long

dead and forgotten, he fell into a kind of muse or dream. His thought projected itself into the far-distant future when he and all his troubles would have passed into a like oblivion. He was in sore perplexity at the time—it was towards the end of 1872,—and he began to meditate upon death as a welcome end to his questionings. In imagination he seemed to stand beside his own grave and saw these words inscribed on the stone :—

“DEI MAXIMI SAPIENTISSIMI  
 BONITATE FRETUS  
 HIC DEMUM  
 ERRORE PROPE INFINITO  
 PERFATIGATUS  
 IN PACE REQUIESCAT  
 CAROLUS HARGROVE  
 ALIQUAMDIU  
 ROMANÆ ECCLESIAE  
 SACERDOS ET MONACHUS  
 POSTEA VERO  
 SOLIUS VERITATIS  
 CULTOR ET CONFESSOR.”

Hargrove seldom concluded a page of his diary without adding explicitly or by implication a prayer for light to the God in whom “he did not believe.” Meanwhile his brother Joseph, with more particularity, was praying that he might be brought into the fold of the Church of England, in some capacity not incompatible with Low Church doctrine. The Learmonths also and other Plymouth Brethren were praying that he might follow in the footsteps of his father. More numerous still, if not more insistent, were the prayers of his Catholic friends, in Trinidad, at Oscott and Carpentras, and in various oratories and convents in England and elsewhere,—and their tenor was of course that he might be

restored to the Church of Rome. It must have added not a little to Hargrove's bewilderment, and might have tempted cynicism in a mind more prone to that philosophy, to learn on opening his letters every morning that he was being prayed for in so many conflicting senses. It is one more testimony to the essentially religious nature of the man that he did not draw the inference which would have immediately suggested itself to a shallow mind.

I have often wondered that the prayers of his Catholic friends did not prevail. Of the letters that have been preserved from persons anxious for his spiritual state those from Catholics are the wisest, the most generous, and the most humane. They never impugn the purity of his motives, nor upbraid him with disloyalty, nor affront him with superior airs, nor sicken him with lamentations over his fall. They abound in kind feeling and good manners and, at the same time, are sagacious, with that rare sagacity which knows the human heart. They must have made a profound impression on Hargrove. It is indeed a significant fact that, among the many new starts and sudden impulses that visited him in this stormy period, that which would have led him back to Rome was not yielded to, nor, so far as I can learn, seriously entertained. It was the line of least resistance, the easiest and, one might almost say, the most natural way out of his difficulties—a way he had taken before and might have taken again with much comfort to his soul. So at least his Catholic friends, who knew what they were saying, assured him. There were moments, it is true, when the shocks he encountered from Protestant cant or bad manners caused him "to turn his face Romewards." But the mood never lasted for long, never took hold upon his will. Amid all the oscillations of purpose during this period his breach with Rome stands out as the mark of an irrevocable decision, an act involving the whole man,



body, mind, and soul, as consistent in the sequence as it was swift and trenchant in the original execution. The finality of this act is the sufficient proof that, in spite of all superficial appearances to the contrary, Hargrove was, even in the hour of shipwreck, "captain of his soul."

"What," he asks, "made me leave the Church? The direct reason was sincere doubt or unbelief. The occasion of this was, in great part at least, my moral and spiritual alienation from the Church and consequent difficulties and disgust. But the reason of *this* was not merely the circumstances in which I was placed, so unfavourable to the spiritual life, but far more the absolute incompatibility of my strange temperament with the artificial life of monastic discipline. This was conclusively proved by experience of convent life both in Rome and France, but above all by the months passed as a priest at Carpentras<sup>1</sup> when I was in a state that could have ended only in a life of entire ease or in madness. Idle, self-seeking, self-pleasing ways led me by a course natural enough to the Church [of Rome]; and thither they tend to lead me back again. Did I return I should find sympathy, quench doubt, be rid of all anxiety. And how? By a deliberate sacrifice of truthfulness. Good God, if Thou knowest and pitiest my miseries, save me from the dominion of delusion. Make me loyal evermore to Truth."

That the reader may realise what kind of pressure it was which Hargrove had to resist from the part of his Catholic friends, how loving and ardent their efforts to recover him, I shall here give a letter from Father Cyril Ryder of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart, together with Hargrove's reply. It will be observed that the "very

<sup>1</sup> This was immediately after his father's death, which I indicated, the reader will remember, as the beginning of the end of Hargrove's life in the Church of Rome.

dear friend" quoted by Father Ryder in the first part of the letter is no other than Hargrove himself—as he was in 1869.

"ST MARY'S, BAYSWATER,  
"February 6, 1873.

"MY DEAR HARGROVE,—A very dear friend of mine writing to me from the Dominican convent at Carpentras to tell me of his approaching ordination in May 1869, says: 'I hope to say my first Mass the next morning.' He then adds: 'O how good a thing it is to serve God! There was a time when I sought only to please myself, and I was utterly miserable; but ever since I have given myself to God, I have found in Him only joy and peace and satisfaction, and if I have met at times with some little sorrow or displeasure, it has almost always arisen from my little loyalty or confidence towards so good a Master. If in the course of your ministry you meet with souls fearing to obey the call of God, and dreading the sacrifice involved in conversion to Holy Church, you may tell them of one, who, forced by God to leave all for Him, thought never to smile again, but to live in continual misery; but who has found after seven years' experience only ever-increasing contentment and gladness of heart, so that he sings, with a child's glee, of Holy Mother Church. . . . So I beg you to thank God on my behalf, and beseech Him to fill me with His holy love, so that henceforth I may live to Him alone, and seek His holy Will and not mine, as well in little things as in great. Then no deficiency of mind or body will avail to render fruitless my ministry, because He will work in me and not myself.'

"So far my friend from Carpentras. It seems to me you are just such a one as he would have wished me to quote his letter to. How I wish I could see you! Don't you think you could find time to run up to London some time? A letter can never make up for a talk. I think I understand your state of

mind. You must have got miserable out in that detestable Trinidad, and I dare say the Archbishop, being a Frenchman, did not understand your difficulties, and so the whole thing has come about.

“I don’t wish to make out that things are not very serious. I willingly admit that they are, but I want you quietly by yourself to look them in the face and see what there is to be done. First look up to Mary Immaculate our Mother, and whose sweet name you bear. Imagine that she speaks to you and tells you just how things stand, what is past hope, and *what is not*. Remember *no one* (and therefore *you* will not be the first) ever was lost who had recourse to her with confidence. She will lead you back with absolute certainty so that you will be again a priest saying daily Mass, and may become, if you will, a saint. If the devil tries to keep you back by shame, remember this, that those whose opinion is worth having will treat you always with all consideration and charity, and anyone who acts otherwise proves himself to be one whose opinion is worthless, and who had better take great heed lest he fall himself. This is true, and may help one to resist some temptation of the devil to shame, but it is not the reason I would really put before you. Ask our Lady to teach you the value of humility. It is only by it that any of us can become holy and united to God. When our Lord humbled Himself in His baptism the heavens opened above Him and the voice of the Eternal Father was heard acknowledging Him for His Son, and the Holy Ghost descended visibly upon Him. The same takes place invisibly in our souls whenever we humble ourselves. The chief subject for humility with us is, of course, our sins, and open sins known to the world are not always the worst before God. There is no foundation so sure for humility as a sense of our own sinfulness. Think of St Peter. He fell terribly and openly, and he never forgot his fall ; but upon it he

founded, as on a most sure foundation, the humility necessary for one raised to be the head of the whole Church. Tradition says he never ceased weeping for his fall, but that the tears he shed even to the end of his life had worn deep furrows down his face. In one's daily struggle with self, when one sees one's need of humility, and the difficulty of attaining it, one almost envies those to whom God has given some great humiliation in the face of the world, so great a help to union with God does it seem.

“This is the view I would really put before you, because it alone is worthy of you, and it is the one I would like to be put before me if ever I were in your case. Open your eyes, and see how sweetly and lovingly and compassionately our dear Lord is inviting you. There is no scorn, no resentment in His heart. If only you will be faithful to Him now and follow Him, in that moment the heavens will open above your head though you see them not, and the Holy Ghost will descend on your poor soul, which so needs Him, and fill it with His beauty and His strength, and the Eternal Father will again acknowledge you for His child. Remember, we must all become as little children if we would enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Remember likewise that there is no homage so acceptable to the majesty of God, and no offering so dear to the Love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as the confidence which will not let us lose courage after a fall—which makes us say, ‘I will arise and go to my Father and say, I have sinned,’ *i.e.* I will arise and return to the bosom of the Church which is alone my house, and there I will live henceforth as a humble penitent. Oh! if only you do this, it will not be in the last place, nor near the last place, that you will reign throughout the ages of eternity.

“Convince yourself that the future is bright and peaceful. Intensely bright, as bright as heaven itself. Resign yourself to the Holy Ghost, and let Him lead

you home. Ask Mary to take your hand and lead you home, for she is the instrument of the Holy Spirit. How can you fear to resign yourself to her, to whom those beautiful words of Holy Scripture are applied : 'All her ways are beautiful ways, and all her paths are peace' ?

"Now, my friend in the Heart of our Lord, do not think I am raising myself up like a Pharisee and preaching as though I thought myself better than you. I acknowledge now from my heart, in the presence of our Lord, that my perseverance until now has not been in the least due to myself, but has been the gratuitous gift of the Sacred Heart, gained by Mary's prayers. I am certain this gift will be preserved if only I do not deliberately forsake our Blessed Mother—so I do not fear.

"I am not exaggerating, I believe, when I say that if our Lord said to me now, 'He shall return, but you must agree to die now and by a long and painful illness,' I should accept it with joy, and think it the greatest of privileges. I do not know if this is real charity, but I hope it is, for if we truly love one another our Lord will love us.—Believe me, ever in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, your very affectionate friend,

"CYRIL RYDER, Cong. O.S.C."

### *Hargrove's Reply*

"12 TENNIS COURT ROAD,  
"CAMBRIDGE, *February* 12, 1873.

"Your very kind letter was forwarded to me this morning, and is remarkable to me as the first communication I have had from an English Catholic. By silence I have hitherto sought to avoid giving and suffering useless pain, but you have inflicted it on me, and compelled me to seem hard-hearted towards such loving words or to inflict pain in return. I say your letter inflicted pain on me, because it was with real

grief that I left the Church, and I yet stand aloof from it almost by doing violence to myself, and the stirring up of the dear remembrances of past time is like probing a recent wound.

“You know what opium-eaters tell of their rapture and ecstasy under its influence, and of the utter depression that succeeds when the immediate effects of the drug have passed away. Well, it is much my case. From the ground of commonplace life, hardly worth living at all, I look back with longing to the years when, beguiled by a beautiful vision, I lived another life, full of joy and hope. Verily, it was a god-like life, splendours of the Eternal seemed to flow forth upon me from the great mystery of the God I worshipped in the tabernacle. Light from afar as from a vision of brightness inconceivable filled me with longing and delight beyond what I could support. Surely never were conceived by the mind of man ideas more magnificent than those of God, the Life of men, and the object of their everlasting gaze. It is gone, and life is very gloomy. And you write to call me back, and bid me not fear or be ashamed. Right indeed, I need courage; but courage, though with bitter tears, to keep aloof from you. Courage to stand alone in a cold world, when a loving embrace is ready for me. Courage to refuse to beguile my soul with fair visions. Courage to face the darkness, and all but hopelessness of life and death. Courage, above all, to brave the threats, raised around me on every side, of hell, as the reward of truthfulness—the fate destined for all who refuse to believe of God what they would not of the lowest of men.

“Yes, the Catholic Church is wonderful and very beautiful; and one might say, Is there aught like it in the world? If not, how can it be of the world? Declares it not itself, not by voice, but by its *being*, to be of God? The best attempts of man compared with her seem stupid failures, and if they have aught

of beauty it is borrowed of her, unacknowledged. It is all very true, and as yet I cannot comprehend the reasoning of these Protestant sects, nor how they can be justified; they seem to me so far as I can see, most absurd and unattractive.

“But, alas, the Roman Church is not all beautiful. Behind all the heaven-kindled splendours wherewith she attracts us is a background more awfully repulsive, more ghastly and terrible than imagination ever conceived. Did I believe in a devil, I should think that he had sought himself to be incarnated there, as God is in the foreground; or whence came it—that hideous belief that the Creator sends His creatures, all but a select number, to a place of torture inconceivable—that there, as long as He is God, He holds them in life in order to torment them, maintains flame and victim, ceaselessly beholds (omnipotent to stay if so pleases Him), holds never His hand, but measures each pang of agony and bides on in peace and joy. Ten years ago I accepted this doctrine with the utmost difficulty. During ten years I have wrestled with it in many a fearful hour, and at last I have plucked up courage to take up the old words, ‘*Etiamsi occidit me, adhuc sperabo,*’ and believe in the first Gospel, written in man’s inmost heart, that God is good and just, and that cruelty and vengeance are far from Him. I look upon it that *for me* a belief in hell would be blasphemous.

“Well, all is gone, but not conscience. I know nothing of the future and nothing of God perhaps; but I know what to do, to-day. Is it not enough? If not, where shall we find more?”

Obviously there is needed some trenchant sword of the spirit to cut through the entanglement in which the self-questionings of Hargrove have now involved him. The habit of self-analysis, which in him was inborn and which his Catholic training had developed to morbid excess, has

here created a situation from which there is no logical outcome. We must look for solution to the march of events. Or perhaps Nature has yet some means in reserve for forcing an issue.

Those visits to Croydon which had so greatly alarmed Joseph Hargrove were undertaken for another purpose than that of "taking counsel with those who denied our Lord"—clearly not for that alone. I will give the facts as they have been given to me from the most authentic source.

"I always went to the Church of England," writes Mrs Hargrove in 1919, "until I met my husband, or, rather, became engaged to him; and it was through him entirely that I forsook my old faith, to which I returned in 1900. My uncle and aunt belonged to the Croydon Unitarian Church, and it was at their house that I first met my husband in January 1874. I only met him three times at various intervals before we became engaged the following April, when I was six weeks short of seventeen. . . . My father [whose name was Rufenacht] was a Swiss, and died when I was four years old. I was an only child and was born at Vevey, which, curiously enough, was also Mr Suffield's birthplace."

From now onward a fresh and wholesome wind is blowing, the great simplicities are reinstated, and there is a general forward movement in the currents of life. New duties and new loyalties present themselves, either as immediate realities or as dim prospects; he must now think less of *doctrines* and more of *persons*, less of himself and more of another. A most salutary change for such a man; the only change, perhaps, that could save him from wasting his life in vain efforts to hold the East wind in his fist. We witness, if not the new birth of a soul, at least its return to the sense of proportion.

Signs of forward movement do in fact begin to appear



very soon after Hargrove's engagement. One effect of that happy event was to put a swift end to his make-believe about the study of medicine, not to speak of other self-deceptions, and to make him look out in an earnest and practical spirit for some means of earning a livelihood for himself and his future wife. Such a means was not long in presenting itself, thanks no doubt to the fresh earnestness of his search. At that time Cambridge was engaged in launching the great scheme of University Extension, which has since won signal and permanent success. A man was wanted to lecture on English Literature in the Midlands, and though Hargrove's qualifications in that line were somewhat vague, there were those who perceived that his wide culture, his fluency of speech, his powers of clear exposition and good ordering would prove of the utmost value in the work.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE SHIP ANSWERS THE HELM

ARE we bound to take for granted, without criticism and at its face-value, everything that a truthful man writes down in his private diary concerning himself? When the course of his actions is difficult to interpret, his motives obscure, and his decisions unexpected, shall we turn to his private diary as the final court of appeal, and, finding there some lines of self-confession which synchronise with our problem, conclude offhand that we have found the key to the mystery?

Though Charles Hargrove was one of the most transparently truthful men I have ever known—*cultor et confessor veritatis*,—I do not accept the account he gives of himself in his diaries as in all matters decisive. When he is relating a matter of objective fact, as that he did such and such a thing, or he went to such and such a place—yes, of course; but when he turns to the subjective side and takes to analysing himself, to weighing the strength of his motives, to estimating the exact degree of his belief or his unbelief—most emphatically no! It was a part of the fruit of his training in the Roman Church—which he insists did him good on the whole, though in some respects the harm of it was manifest—that a stealthy distrust of himself had become insinuated into the texture of his mind. In an earlier chapter of this book I have presented, not without a purpose, some specimens of the meticulous self-examinations which formed

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HARGROVE IN 1876



the ground of his daily discipline. Such exercises are good for no man. They invert the natural currents of life and fill the soul, which needs to be refreshed by flowing streams, with stagnant backwaters "sicklied o'er with a pale cast of thought." They lead not to useful self-knowledge but to harmful self-deception, both in general and in particular; for it is not once in a thousand times that any of us succeeds in estimating his own motives aright. In addition to all which, they have the effect of making the ego an object of outstanding importance to itself. With some men their end is the egotism of pride and self-righteousness; with far more it is the egotism of self-distrust—an equally pernicious thing.

For that the Church of Rome has its cure; but Charles Hargrove was no longer in the Church of Rome. He had nowhere to lay the burden of his self-distrusts save the pages of his diary. He could not even take them to God, for at this time he was unable to answer definitely, even to himself, whether he believed in God or no. Such an one, when he takes to the recording of his state of mind, or the weighing of himself in a balance, I cannot accept as under all circumstances an accurate witness about himself. The bad habit of putting his beliefs one by one under the microscope—of perpetually asking himself, for example, In what precise sense do I believe in God and immortality?—had the effect, which it always has under these conditions, of turning his beliefs into doubts; at the same time it deprived him of the power to see his life steadily and to see it whole. Had he been able to do this latter he would have perceived that the major motives of his life, *even those which led him into continual doubt*, were all forces drawn from a spiritual world, the reality of which stood attested by that very fact; he would indeed have made the discovery which Carlyle has called the "Everlasting Yea." There are moments when

he seems to be on the point of making it, and he actually made it at last. Meanwhile he continually exaggerated his scepticism, and might almost be said to have taken a morbid pleasure in so doing, a by no means uncommon thing. For these reasons I have become convinced that the key must be sought elsewhere than in these confessions. I find it in the actual fruits of his labour during his forty-two years of service as a minister of God. Had he *drifted* into the ministry, as first appearances would suggest, he would in due course have drifted out. He did not; and the rest of his life goes to prove that in this, the last, crisis of his religious history, he followed the true line of his destiny, as it had been marked out for him from the beginning.

It was on March 4, 1874, that Hargrove "offered himself for the post of Extension Lecturer in English History and Literature." His qualifications for dealing with this subject must have been, at the time, somewhat general, at least from the academic point of view, and it is testimony to the high estimate which the University authorities had formed of his powers as a teacher and public lecturer that he was from the first marked out for the post. He has resolved, he says, to give up medicine at Cambridge on the ground that the place did not agree with his health, and "I have not courage to begin elsewhere"—once more deceiving himself as to the true reason.

A week later he has a long interview with Dr M'Carthy, "and in a calm conversation did not disguise from him my utter unbelief, which, however, did not shock him." Turning back, however, to January 18, when he had preached for Suffield at Croydon, I find that the subject of his sermon was "The Faith of the Theist," in the course of which he defends the doctrine of "One God, above all knowledge and thought; the hope that all things work together for good; the love to all men, animals, the universe. The

Theist is the true Catholic, embracing all religious men of all religious beliefs"—which indicates that at this time Hargrove had begun to call himself a Theist, and is hardly to be reconciled with the "utter unbelief" professed to Dr M'Carthy two months later. However, let that pass. The unfriendly critic on the lookout for inconsistencies would have no difficulty in finding a dozen such. But he who considers the staggering disillusion from which Hargrove had just emerged will not expect him to find his bearings all at once.

The mere prospect of the lectureship is enough to impart a new liveliness to the scene. He is beginning to enjoy himself, and chronicles the fact from time to time. He has a wide circle of friends, heads of houses, professors, fellows, and Doctors of Divinity, and hardly a day passes but he is lunching or dining with one or the other—evidently a man much sought after by lovers of good conversation. He travels about a good deal, with a tendency to gravitate towards Croydon. On March 18 he meets George Dawson, the radical Birmingham preacher; lunches with him, of course, and is astonished to find how nearly their views coincide; which is further confirmed by hearing Dawson preach. Meanwhile that painful correspondence with his brother, of which we have heard something, is causing him sleepless nights. Resolves to have it out with Joseph in plain terms to this effect, "that since I am an infidel, why should I not keep company with infidels?"—the "infidels" in question being Martineau, George Dawson, and others of their way of thinking. An afternoon with Westcott is noted as "extremely pleasant," because "he gave me a free rein to talk of matters I thoroughly understood." Next day he remarks that his religious position is more defined "than at any time since I left the Church of Rome."

On Easter Sunday he again preaches in Suffield's church on the Resurrection, to the effect that in the historical sense that great event is, at most, probable, but in the spiritual sense certainly real. "Christ is really risen:—1. In the Church, through His spirit animating it. 2. In the souls of men drawing from their faith in Him life and holiness and comfort. 3. In ourselves, if we rise to a new life." Which sermon, he adds, "pleased Miss Rufenacht, but did not meet with my own approval. . . . I was conscious of a desire to satisfy the audience, of going beyond my lights."

He has now (March 1874) cut his connection with Cambridge, "except as a visitor," is fairly launched on the project of the lectureship, and has six months before him to prepare for his new duties—in the reading-room of the British Museum and elsewhere. But concentration of mind sustained through long periods was never one of his characteristics. Now less so than usual. I find, for example, that, going to the British Museum to study Anglo-Saxon, he spends the day instead in looking up some obscure details of his family tree. In general it is clear that his engagement, which had taken place in April, and the exuberance of spirits which followed, are far from being favourable to his preparations for the lectureship; and, indeed, he often accuses himself rather bitterly of wasting his time. But I have heard that under certain circumstances wasted time is time well spent, and the generous reader will, perhaps, give him the benefit of the doubt.

There are frequent visits to Cambridge "to settle plans for his lectures," and, the plans settled, there is almost invariably "a walk and a talk," a lunch or a dinner—not, be it observed, with any of the then reigning authorities in "English History and Literature," but with some clerical notability or with some professor of the Queen of the



Sciences, the name of Westcott being mentioned the oftenest. His reading seems to have been conducted on a similar principle, if the unconscious self-revelations of his diary are to be trusted, as they should be in this particular. One can see very plainly, for example, that if a volume of "striking" sermons by James Martineau, or by that greater but less known Unitarian preacher, John Hamilton Thom, happens to fall into his hands in the early hours of the morning, when he should have been thinking of the *Reeve's Tale*, the sermons have it, and Chaucer is given the go-by till next day.

However, by hook or by crook, he manages to get his Inaugural Lecture on "Poetry : its Nature, Form and Kinds," with some of its appendages, fairly written out ; and reads the same aloud to Miss Rufenacht and the assembled members of her family, all parties being well satisfied with the experiment. In the first week of October he delivers it to an audience of about two hundred persons in Nottingham, where he has taken up his residence. Thereafter, we catch stray glimpses of him flying to and fro for the rest of the winter as a missionary of knowledge between Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, Sheffield, and Lincoln ; catching cold in waiting-rooms, swallowing hasty meals at railway buffets, enduring consequential woes on the platform, of which happily his large audiences know nothing, and coming home dead-beat to his Nottingham lodging to find "120 examination papers just come in for correction." But the work prospers, and, as usual, he has no lack of friends who, when once they have him by the fireside, cannot let him go till the small hours of the morning. Among these friends I find many names familiar in the history of that enlightened and go-ahead city—J. B. Paton, prominent among the men to whom Nottingham owes its University, Richard Enfield, "a perfect gentleman" and

promoter of all good works, Mrs Roby Thorpe, "a friend till death," Samuel Morley the philanthropist, Morse the vicar, Armstrong the fearless Unitarian preacher, Edwin Smith the schoolmaster, Beddard the physician, James Matheson the broadminded Congregationalist, "who has eleven children and a small salary, but is, I think, one of the happiest men I ever met."

He is lecturing on "the Four Great Poets of England"—Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Shakespeare. As a motto to the whole course he has prefixed the following words of Hegel: "The effect of the contemplation of the Beautiful, which it is the aim of Art to reveal to us, is a calm and pure joy incompatible with the gross pleasures of sense; it lifts the soul above its ordinary sphere; it disposes to noble resolutions and generous actions by the close affinity which exists between the three sentiments and the three ideas—the Good, the Beautiful, and the Divine."

Great is the change that has come over him since the days, not so long ago, when he "embraced the walls of his cell" in the Convent of Santa Sabina. He is now engaged in "the contemplation of the Beautiful" as aforetime he had been engaged in the contemplation of the Ugly—to wit, his own sins. His ego is no longer "an object of supreme interest to itself"; he is immersed in the humanities, which are the best cure for egotism, especially of the spiritual variety; he is beginning "to feel his audience" and to realise therewith his powers as a teacher, a guide, and—perhaps—a prophet also. For it is abundantly evident from these lectures, the full text of which is before me, that his studies of the "mind of Milton" and "the problem of Macbeth" are affording him a wider field for converse with the things of the spirit than he has ever enjoyed before; and not only so, but an opportunity for leading young minds, through the study of such things,

to "the contemplation of the Divine." He is now studying live facts, and not dead abstractions. He is more than a mere missionary of knowledge. Unconsciously he has begun to preach or to prophesy, and is well on the way to fulfil "the substance of his vows." And what better guides for a soul embarked on a pilgrimage from authority to freedom can we imagine than the Four Great English Poets? —Milton, for example, whose socinianism in *Paradise Lost* he had, only two years earlier, found so "shocking" that he had to lay down the book; Milton, of whom Faber had said, in a "favourite passage" copied out by Hargrove about the same time, "Accursed be his blasphemous memory, [he] spent a great part of his life in writing down my Lord's divinity. . . . England has no need of Milton. . . . And I have never repented of the hour when at the University I threw into the fire my beautiful four-volume edition of Shelley" (*Life and Letters*, p. 205).

We shall err greatly if we think of these years of lecturing as a disconnected episode in Hargrove's life. They were precisely what was needed, just then and there to enable him to gather up the disordered strands of his mind, to give him a new starting-point, to open out visions of the realms through which he was destined to travel, and to impart an impulse to his will by felt contact with the minds of his fellow-men.

Here is a passage from his lectures on the religion of Shakespeare, which, like all these lectures, bears the marks of sound scholarship and close thinking. It illustrates what I have been saying, and shows incidentally how deeply his mind was influenced at this time by the writings of James Martineau:—

"To me, indeed, it seems that the assumption laid down as the basis of all theological training by the greatest religious teacher of our age, and approved by the greatest

living teacher of science, would not unwillingly have been subscribed by Shakespeare also. First, that the universe which includes us is the dwelling of an Eternal Mind. Second, that the world of our abode is the scene of a moral government not yet complete. Third, that the upper zones of human affection, above the clouds of self and passion, take us into the sphere of divine communion. Into this over-arching scene it is that growing thought and enthusiasm have expanded to catch their light and fire. And Professor Tyndal adds: 'Alpine summits must kindle above the mountaineer who reads these stirring words: I see their beauty and feel their life.' Would not Shakespeare [feel them], and from sonnet and drama can we not with due sympathy discover so much? . . . He would, and indeed does, add, as they would, that all the dogmas and systems are but changing dress, adorning or disfiguring eternal truths."

From the outset he had resolved to devote his lectures mainly to the exposition of Shakespeare, and I cannot doubt, from the specimens of his work before me, that had he continued in that line he would have become recognised in due course as one of the foremost Shakespearean critics of his time. The work, however, covered a wider field, and involved him in a good deal of philological as well as literary study. There were courses on the "Origin of the English Language," on "the Beginnings of English Literature," as well as those I have already mentioned.

His marriage to Miss Rufenacht took place in May 1875, about two and a half years after his secession from the Church of Rome. He was married by Mr Suffield in the Unitarian Chapel at Hampstead, his brother Joseph refusing to be present at the ceremony but consenting, under pressure from Charles and with much reluctance, to put in an appearance at "the breakfast."

Shortly afterwards he was transferred from Nottingham to the new centre for University Extension that was being established in Liverpool. His reputation as a lecturer was high ; he had unquestionably "made a success of it" ; not only had he proved himself a master of his subject—a point that must have been doubtful when he was first appointed—but he had shown the power of gaining and holding large audiences. The means of earning his living were in his hands ; he was a young man of thirty-five, and might reasonably look forward to higher employment—perhaps to a professorship in one of the universities. But other things were in store for him.

## CHAPTER X

### UNITARIAN MINISTER (1876)

DURING his residence in Liverpool he came into close and frequent contact with Dr Charles Beard, the pastor of the congregation of Unitarians then worshipping in Renshaw Street Chapel. Next to James Martineau, Beard was the most conspicuous figure in the Unitarianism of that day, a man in whom idealism and realism were well mingled, eminent both as a scholar and as a divine, a brilliant writer, a powerful orator in the pulpit and on the platform. In the Church of England he would have become a bishop, in politics a Cabinet minister, in journalism editor of the *Times*. He was, moreover, a discerning judge of character ; tender to men of good will, but intolerant of bad workmanship and a scourge to pretence. To be a friend of Charles Beard was to be in touch with whatever was most alive and promising in Unitarian thought, so that an outsider, forming his impression of the movement from him as its living representative, would at least be inspired with a feeling of respect. It was through Charles Beard that Hargrove came to understand the significance of the Unitarian position as he had never understood it before, and to see that it provided the very opening his mind had been groping after, more or less dimly, since he left the Church of Rome.

We have seen that on several occasions during the period of uncertainty Hargrove had been on the point of entering the ministry of the Church of England. But, in

spite of the strong drawing in that direction, he had always stopped short of the final step on realising the accommodations that would have to be practised before his love of veracity could be reconciled with the recitation of the official Creeds. If accommodating arguments were valid, he saw no reason why he should ever have left the Church of Rome, whose position, once the main premise was granted, seemed to him more logical than that of the Church of England. Moreover, his past experience had deepened his dread of sophistry. Without passing judgment on others who had arrived at different conclusions, he knew himself well enough to be fully assured that for *him* to place himself in their position would be to play fast and loose with his own conscience. He foresaw that the question "Do you *really* believe all this?" which had overthrown him in Trinidad, would haunt him every time he recited the Creed and make his life a burden. It was at this point that former advisers had failed to understand his mind, giving him counsel which caused him to shrink the more from the course they were urging him to follow.

But in Charles Beard he found an adviser of a widely different type. Beard said nothing to him about "accommodations." He revealed to Hargrove what, till then, the latter had not fully realised—namely, that he was by no means the religious outcast he had hitherto been wont to deem himself. He showed him a religious community in being, small but not negligible, whose historical position was precisely that to which Hargrove had independently won his way. For him there was obviously a place in that community, where his refusal to be bound by any kind of formal profession would only cause him to be the more warmly welcomed. This, coming from a man of exceptionally powerful intellect and transparent straightforwardness of purpose, went deep. It is true that Hargrove had heard

of these things before ; but the hearing them from Charles Beard made a difference. For the first time he began to discern a clear opening through which the interrupted current of his life might resume its natural course.

Through his connection with Beard he was, moreover, enabled to see more than he had seen before of the actual effects of Unitarianism in lay character and life. He was introduced to a noble civic tradition and to the men who embodied it. The movement in Liverpool was of course under religious ostracism, as it was elsewhere, isolated even in the midst of nonconformity. But in the members of the Renshaw Street Congregation, to whom he was rapidly introduced, Hargrove saw citizenship and lay culture at its best. In former times, as we have seen, he had been repelled from Protestantism by the sense of a breach between its professions and its practice, in which respect it had seemed to him in striking contrast to the Church of Rome. But here, in the Ultima Thule of Protestantism, he found a difference. He found that these men, on whose church all the other denominations turned their backs, were marked off by their moral dignity, by their liberality of mind, by their indifference to what the sects thought of them, by their abhorrence of cant, and by their public-spirited use of wealth, of which they had great abundance. He observed that in whatever good works were afoot in Liverpool the Unitarians seemed to have a leading part ; that the enterprises in that city, whether of commerce, philanthropy, education, or social reform, which flourished and prospered most had Unitarian brains and Unitarian probity at the back of them. He not only liked these men—for they were humane and courteous,—but greatly admired them as a distinct type of the citizen : the Roscoes, the Gairs, the Rathbones, the Jevons', the Brights, the Holts, the Mellys, the Tates, the Brunners, the



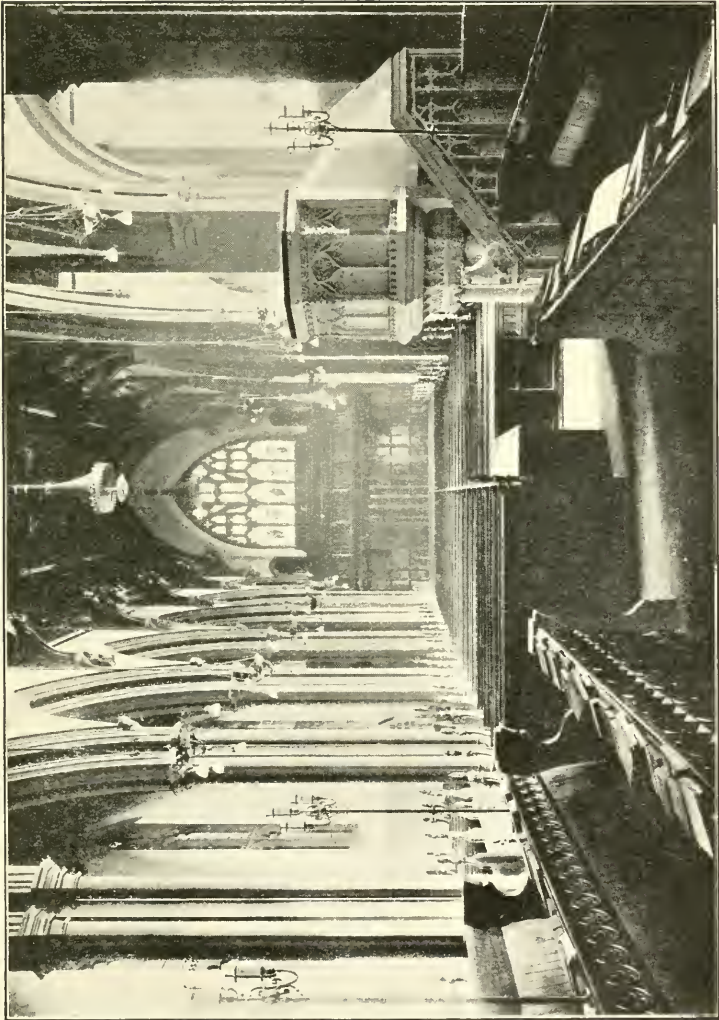
Bowings, and many others too numerous to name. In later life Hargrove often told me of the profound impression their personalities made upon him in his then state of mind. They set him thinking on new lines. It occurred to him that religious ostracism, to which by this time he was well used, was a small price to pay for the company of such men as those with whom he was now beginning to associate ; and that he for his part would rather run the risk of losing his soul with them than save it with some others whom he knew. His mind, indeed, was busy with arguments of a more formal kind, as I shall presently indicate ; he was listening to historical and other explanations given him by Charles Beard, or John Hamilton Thom, who was living in retirement, but to be heard on occasion ; and those explanations occurring in personal converse with men of their calibre had a very different effect on him from what they would have had if encountered in the pages of a printed book.

I think it will be found generally true that the course of most spiritual pilgrimages is determined more by persons than by arguments ; at least that no kind of argument is really convincing unless the right kind of person is there to enforce it. When those who have passed through great changes of religious opinion explain to other people the reasons that moved them, they usually say, " I argued thus and thus, I laid down such premises, and I drew such conclusions." It was thus that Hargrove was wont to explain himself in public. But when we pass under review the general circumstances of such men's lives at the time the changes took place we shall often find that the theological argument is only the means the man employs for summing up and interpreting to himself an inner transformation of his will which other influences, chiefly personal, had already brought about. It was in this way, unless I am much mistaken, that the Christian religion took its first form in

the world ; and all the *re*-formations that have since taken place within it illustrate pretty much the same principle. At all events, we must give due weight to the fact that in Liverpool the thing known as "Unitarianism" shone with conspicuous lustre in the persons of those who professed it, both clerical and lay, many of whom were his intimate friends. Little more was needed to turn him, being what he then was, into a professor of that form of religious teaching, as the means divinely appointed him for carrying out his inflexible resolution to fulfil the substance of his vows—the vows, namely, of a man self-consecrated to the service of God.

It happened in the summer of 1876 that the pulpit was vacant in Mill Hill Chapel, in the city of Leeds. Between the Unitarians of Liverpool and the Unitarians of Leeds there had long been, as I have heard, a certain rivalry of high traditions. Both groups could claim a succession of fearless preachers dating back to the Act of Uniformity ; both had weathered the same storms, and withstood the same obloquy for two centuries ; both lived in equal scorn of the bigot and his bigotry, and there was not a name honoured by the one for service rendered to the public good but the other could match it with a name of equal worth. As they were radical in matters of religion so they tended to the democratic side in matters political ; each vying with the other in the number of distinguished Liberals it had sent into Parliament. But in their persons, their temper, their mode of life both groups belonged alike to the aristocracy of dissent ; they were intolerant of vulgarity in all its forms, but most of all when it intruded itself into religious worship ; they would have no clap-trap in their pulpits and would rather be considered "cold" than have their preachers depart one hair's-breadth from the narrow path of veracity and straightforwardness. They looked for intellect and

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INTERIOR OF MILL HILL CHAPEL, LEEDS



high culture in the minister, expecting him not only to give them sound doctrine on Sundays but to be their spokesman in the weekday life of the community. While moral rectitude, or rather, moral excellence, was the quality most generally valued, there were not wanting among them men of a profound mystical tendency who could only be moved by demonstrations of the spirit and of power—in which respect they resembled the Quakers, as in many others. In all these matters the two groups, Liverpool and Leeds, were alike.

The Mill Hill pulpit falling vacant, as I have said, and a request for advice being sent to Charles Beard, he delayed not a moment to indicate Hargrove as the man. None knew better than Beard the qualifications that were required, and, as the event amply proved, he made no mistake in declaring that Hargrove possessed them. A word from him was enough to set the wheels in motion.

At this time the Leeds people did not know Hargrove personally ; but they had heard this and that about him. Some doubted whether a man with a history such as his could possibly be sound in the faith. Who could say that this gad-about would not repeat the strange proceedings—the “antics” said some—which had marked his previous career ? What if he changed again, perhaps “bolting” into the Church of Rome, as he had done once before—a thing “unheard of in Unitarian circles” ? Moreover, there were certain busybodies, light-headed and evil-tongued—not in Leeds—at work upon a fable, based on “circumstantial evidence,” about “a Jesuit in disguise”—a tale to be repeated more venomously later on, and passed over by Hargrove in contemptuous silence, as it shall be by his present biographer. But the leaders of the congregation were as bold as they were sagacious. To those who pleaded that it were wiser to run no risks, but choose a man with

a more intelligible past, they answered, as practical men, that the wise choosing of your risks is the secret of successful business. Of course in such a case the most careful inquiry is needed ; they had made it ; Mr Hargrove had treated it as a thing to be expected, and was willing to expose his past to the fullest scrutiny. For the rest it only remained to see him, to know him, to hear him preach—and after that “we will decide.” Thus the business was transacted, Mr Joseph Lupton, the wool merchant, being, as I gather, the leading spirit.

On his side the matter proceeded as follows. I follow the entries in his diary :—

May 2.—“ . . . Beard informed me that the Unitarian Church in Leeds wanted a minister, and gave me his private opinion that I should be gladly accepted. Just the offer I have often discussed and always desired might come in four or five years and not sooner. Is my life to be ever staid at cross roads ? Lectured on Hamlet.”

May 2.—“ Answered Mrs Learmonth, declaring my Unitarian principles, in consequence of her request that I would ‘carefully and prayerfully consider’ two childish tracts she sent me.”

May 6.—“ Mr Lupton hopes I am ‘sound in the faith,’ which sets me thinking Leeds is no place for me.”

May 7.—“ To Beard’s. I walked with him to chapel, discussing Unitarian doctrine and my prospects. . . . We were both agreed as to the paramount importance of religion as distinct from dogma.”

May 18.—“ I left for Leeds by the 1.40 train. Mr Joseph Lupton met me, and took me to his club to dine. . . . I took my text, ‘Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.’ Common ignorance of God shared by teacher and taught : *but the teacher is set apart to learn the divine* and to communicate what he learns. How God

becomes known or is taught to us:—1. By the feelings : love, awe, and adoration. 2. By the will : in practical morality—by real, not artificial, virtues. 3. By the intellect : (a) speculating on the divine, but this is a poor way, producing no fruit or evil fruit ; (b) exercised on the works of Nature ; (c) exercised on the human, which is most truly the Divine and its highest manifestation. No *sacred and profane* : all sacred because of God."

June 9.—"My mind fluctuating to and fro respecting Leeds. On the one hand, I desire the settled work for life and the opportunity of speaking out on subjects far more important than literature. On the other, I fear the amount of restraint I shall be under, the temptation to give up thinking."

June 10.—"At Leeds, met by Mr Lupton. In the evening came in Mr and Mrs Talbot and Dr and Mrs Greenhow, and I had to undergo an examination, kind indeed and delicate, about my faith."

June 11 (Sunday).—"Awake till half-past four, counting every stroke of the church clock hard by. Preached (morning) on the Christianity of Christ, from Luke ix. 49, 50, comparing the Athanasian Creed of this Trinity Sunday with the words and teaching of Jesus. Evening, Acts xxiv. 14. The idea I strove to carry through the service was the worship of God independent of dogma, false or true, and hence our fellowship with the worshippers of past time and of the present, concluding that nearness to God was attained not by knowledge of Him, but by confession of our ignorance of Him. Trinity Sunday 1869—my first Mass. I look back upon it with no feeling of remorse or regret. Thank God that I am what I am, that I was what I was, that alike through darkness and through twilight my soul may be brought onward to know its own littleness."

On June 28 he receives a definite invitation from Mr Francis Lupton, in the name of his fellow-worshippers who hope that "you as our minister and we as earnest co-operators with you in all good works may prove worthy of the long line of distinguished men who for many years have endeavoured to make our congregation illustrious alike for enlightened teaching and for good works"—an eminently characteristic expression in which we hear the authentic tones of the "Unitarian" tradition.

The invitation was accepted. He was not to begin his duties till October. The interval is almost blank in the diary, but on August 31 I find him "discouraged, doubting, wishing or half-wishing that I had never contemplated a change of life."

October 1.—"Preached for first time at Leeds as minister. It was the same day in 1864 that I took the vows at Santa Sabina. Now again I dedicate myself to good, but I trust with clearer understanding."

At Santa Sabina, of which the memories came back, thick-crowding, on this fateful day, he had dedicated himself to Christ, to His Holy Mother, and to St Dominic.

*Now* he dedicates himself, it will be observed, to *good*. Why did he choose this word and not another so nearly like it? The next chapter will answer the question.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE GOAL ATTAINED

“ [THE Church] was no longer infallible and could have no claim on my obedience. What then was for me? The scepticism only which I had so much dreaded? No, another way was opened up before me. I could not accept any new revelation or new interpretation of an old revelation. But might it not be that all true revelations were but partial readings of that one great enduring revelation of God in the heavens, on earth and nature, in man, in his history, in the individual conscience and reason? It wanted no infallible teacher to point out this way, for every man had the witness to it in himself. Some, indeed, might see and feel it clearly, others but dimly; but to each, walking by the light he had, was offered the way Godward. Here, indeed, I found a Church truly one and catholic, for it alone excluded none, recognised as deadly no mistakes save that of altogether denying religion, and the possibility of it. It was not immediately that I saw this, and it was yet longer before I saw my way opened to joining that one body which has no creeds and no tests, which unites in cordial sympathy men widely differing in opinion, agreeing together in worship of the Supreme Life, and in cordial acknowledgment of the world's obligations to Jesus of Nazareth. Between the consistent religion of dogmatism and the consistent religion of liberty, between the marvellously perfect system of Rome and the entire freedom from system which calls itself Unitarianism, I see no choice.

To give up religion is to give up my very highest being ; to accept any of the multitudinous religious systems which try to keep the mean between the two is, for me, to deny my reason. But Rome with its hell and narrow catholicity I can endure no longer ; willingly, thankfully, rejoicingly I come where there is at once freedom and religion, where I may acknowledge as brethren Theist and Romanist, Calvinist and Ritualist ; in creed, indeed, obliged to condemn all, but thinking of creeds as only certain stumbling-blocks, hindering, it may be, but not destroying true religion ; which often, in spite of them, grows strong and healthy, as a plant forcing its way between the chinks, and covering with its luxuriant beauty the stones which tried to smother it."

This passage occurs in the *apologia pro vita sua* addressed to his Leeds congregation on the occasion of his taking up the ministry in that city.

Observe the phrase "the scepticism I so much dreaded." The faith that Hargrove was seeking was a faith strong enough to hold doubt at bay. Such a faith implies that doubt is free to express itself. Is there, then, in the world any sphere of religious activity where this is acknowledged and permitted, where doubt is regarded not as a sin of the soul but as a right of the intellect, and where in consequence a man is not required to profess himself immune from doubt *before* he can be reckoned as a believer ? If that was true which Hargrove had been told, there was such a sphere, and he had found it among the Unitarians. Had he been required to assert, either to his own soul or to the world, that the sceptical side of his nature was dead for all time, to forgo the right to criticise his own belief, to profess a faith which was never occupied in keeping a *living* doubt at bay, he would not have accepted the position of a Unitarian minister : that fold would have

been closed to him as irrevocably as was the Church of Rome. He had already told the Leeds people that the religious teacher "is set apart to *learn* the Divine, and to communicate what he learns." He knew the perils this process of learning involves; and freedom for him meant freedom to deal with these perils on their merits. This was not the admission that his positive faith was undefined; it was the refusal to profess himself infallible, and it would be thoroughly understood by those to whom it was addressed. And this refusal to profess a degree of certainty greater than he actually possessed had the opposite effect to what a shallow psychology would lead us to expect. As a London vicar wrote shortly after his death: "The questioning note in his nature was so mellowed and considerate that it did more to give one the sense of a faith than the loudest assertion could have done."

What the form of his faith at this time was, and how he came to hold it, he described long afterwards in his address to the American Unitarians in 1900. The reader will not fail to note how strongly his mind remained dominated by conceptions which date from his studies of scholastic philosophy while in the Church of Rome.

"Proofs of the being of God have been laboriously accumulated since first men had leisure to think, and in every generation they have been fortified and re-adjusted to meet the special difficulties of the day. But all such arguments are *a posteriori*: the fact comes first. The sociologist may show how necessary and excellent is the state and the family, but their arguments are subsequent to these institutions, and in no wise the making of them. The love of man and wife, of parent and child, can be proved to be reasonable and advantageous; but it is the instinct of nature, not the persuasion of philosophers, which has produced and sustained it. So it is in respect of God. Men

believe because they do, most convincing of all arguments: they are so fashioned. ‘*Creasti nos Domine ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te.*’ That is both the reason of religion and the proof of it.

“This was the first fact, solid ground on which I placed foot amid shifting sands of contrary faiths. But this supernatural, the existence and accessibility of which nature assured me of, where should I attain it? How get other foot forward so that I might stand secure; grope no more after God in the darkness, if haply I might come upon Him, but actually hold Him? Where in things falling within my own ken was there place for the supernatural?

“I looked around me at the things of this earth, home whence I came, and whereon I pass my little time, I saw on every hand wonder and mystery and beauty; from ‘the flower in the crannied wall’ to man himself all was inexplicable, but all was natural, was within the order of things known to me. I extended my gaze, and on wings of thought traversed the heavens and numbered the stars and suns, but star and sun were natural as light of my study-lamp, as flame of my own hearth. I sought backward into the depths of bygone æons and watched the birth and growth of worlds, and found that a thousand million years ago all was as it is to-day, the same forces at work to make and to unmake and to renew. There seemed no room for God.

“But before the beginning of years—what was then? Beyond the outermost bounds of space—what was there? Being which has no tense because it came not with Time, therefore was not, nor will be, but only is? that is not here nor there, within or without place, but above all place as it is before it? Or if there be no such, if this be only a mystic’s dream, then, oh heaven, why was ever any beginning, or why is there any boundary, any before or after, within or without? ‘*Ex nihilo nihil fit*’ is an axiom of the

schools—‘Out of nothing only nothing can come.’ Whence came all that is? Take your atoms and your force, explain to me how out of vortices came flower and bird and man all in due and intelligible order of evolution. But whence came this all-pervading ether, and who stirred it to motion, and why at such a date and not before or later? Phenomena are mysterious enough, but explanation of them may yet be discovered, and the puzzle of the world be taught in our colleges and schools. But behind the phenomena, before they appeared, what? Being! that is the true supernatural. Space is but the stage whereon is acted the time-long drama of Creation. Glowing mists fill the scene, whirl swiftly round, sunder and part, and orbs come into view, hot from the primeval furnace, cool down till life becomes possible and straightway appears, and—I too, actor and spectator, come upon the scene, play my part, and exit—and still the cooling goes on even as of the iron taken from the grate, and life fails and movement slackens, and the curtain of universal silence falls on the equilibrium of forces which is eternal death. But this is not all, or there never had been anything. How was the equilibrium first disturbed, or how came force at all into existence? Did the stage appear itself? and the drama, was it its own composer?

“Nay, Time demands Eternity for a background, even as the passing train the still country through which it moves. Space with its infinite divisibility bespeaks an indivisible Unity which embraces it all, a Universe—a One Whole as the innate faith of discerning men has named it. Finite is a term of negation implying a preceding infinite. Multitude is inconceivable without the one from which it is parted and in which it is included. Law and the Cosmos which it creates, Life and the infinite variety to which it gives birth, they are not many but One. And behind all things seen is the Unseen, underneath nature the

supernatural which gave it birth and sustains it ; below all phenomena is Being. God is all in all.

“Granted, then, this greatest of all truths, so great that in compare with it there is no other truth true, as in full noonshine lamps and stars lose their shining, elsewise bright enough and of much use to men. Granted, as indeed all men with only individual exceptions do grant it, what follows ? Shall we gaze, as stand and gaze, they say, for ever, the angels before the Throne, in the rapture of a glory which lifts us above time ? Nay, for the vision is of Life as well as Light, of Love as it is of Beauty. Will you, because the sun shines, bask all day idle in its light ? Nay, but because it is day will you work : darkness the time for idleness, night for sleep. The vision of the Almighty is source of might, and the energy of it is transmuted into all commonest work—Sunday schools, committees, parochial visits, daily duties ; even as he who drew nearest to God of all mortal men and dared say, ‘I and the Father are one,’ ‘went about’ the towns and villages of Galilee ‘doing good, and healing all that were oppressed,’ and took little children to his arms. . . .

“God is, God is good, such is my final creed. Firm based I stand on this which includes the truth of all creeds of men, which contains in its simple statement the refutation of all errors. Creed which unites in its confession all the worshippers of all worlds ; creed of Christ who taught ‘The Lord is One, and thou shalt love’ as all law and prophecy ; creed of might to save the world if we poor men had but the might to make it heard !”

## CHAPTER XII

### A BITTER CONSEQUENCE

JOSEPH HARGROVE had known for some time that his brother held Unitarian or, as he would call them, "infidel" opinions. But he believed that the phase would pass, as others had done before it; that Charles would "come out" of this as he had come out of Romanism, and be brought back to "the form of sound doctrine" in accordance with the prayers which he and the Learmonths and "dear George Müller of Bristol" and many others were daily offering for the restoration of the backslider. But when he learnt that Charles had accepted the position of a Unitarian minister, thereby setting the seal to his heresies and becoming a public teacher of them, it seemed to him that the religious scandal of his brother's conduct had reached the limit of gravity.

Joseph Hargrove never entirely abandoned hope. Even so late as 1910, when old age had brought a reconciliation, I find him writing in hopeful strain to Charles on his seventieth birthday. "You know," he says (July 4, 1910), "my one desire and daily prayer for you. The last time I saw old George Müller, he said, with the quiet assurance of his well-tried faith, that God would yet bring you out to be a great witness for His truth, using your experience of Romanism and Unitarianism to testify for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I remember well how he spoke with the air of a prophet, though with his own

perfect humility. To that hope I cling, that we may yet be found side by side, preaching the same Gospel which our father taught."

Charles loved his brother with an almost feminine tenderness of feeling, many of his letters to him being such as a devoted sister might have written. He had appealed to Joseph's sympathy when he was in great distress of mind and almost friendless; but Joseph's view that Charles was a backslider, whose doings were a scandal to religion and an outrage to the memory of their father, imposed reserves upon his response. His condemnation of his brother was as complete as the father's, and based on much the same grounds; but it lacked the fierce passion of love which mingled with the father's invectives and may even be said to have prompted them. What stung Charles most in Joseph's letters was the repeated suggestion that he had committed *sin* in joining the Church of Rome, or holding other opinions different from his own, and that he must repent and ask forgiveness at the Throne of Grace before he could hope to be accepted by God.

There were faults on both sides, and there were excuses too. Reading Joseph's letters—of which a large number have been placed in my hand—I do not find them cold, bitter or eminently unreasonable. His affection for Charles shows itself plainly enough, but checked and guarded by "higher considerations." Of the two he was in the more difficult position. He could not solve the conflict between "duty to God" and "duty to his brother"—at least he was never fully satisfied that he had solved it aright. But who can solve it? On the whole, his conduct was consistent with his principles. Unfortunately there was nothing in the temperament of either man to act as a solvent of the logical *impasse*. But there was something to make it worse. Both when provoked were theologically combative, though



they would sometimes deceive themselves into thinking the contrary. The repeated resolution "to avoid controversy" was constantly broken on both sides.

Absurd, though with a tragic absurdity, were the attempts which Charles made from time to time to establish some formal pact or League of Peace, in which they were to agree once for all not to quarrel over religious matters, and to keep up brotherly relations on that negative basis; not perceiving that the mere existence of such a pact would destroy the "brotherliness" of the whole arrangement. Equally ill-conceived was his repeated assurance to Joseph that he thought no worse of him for holding views radically different from his own, which, in Joseph's eyes, was precisely as though a condemned criminal in the dock were to assure the judge on the bench that he thought no worse of him for representing the majesty of the law.

The truth is that neither of these men could see what lay on the other side of the fence that divided them. Charles in his Catholic days had often quoted Luke xiv. 26 to justify himself in sacrificing family affection to truth: he kept the terrible words "constantly lying on his table." But who shall say that Joseph's table was not similarly furnished? On the strength of those words Charles had brought down his father's grey hairs in sorrow to the grave. Could he then deny the right of his brother to turn the same point against himself? Logically there was no solution, and all attempts to reach it in that way, and by letter-writing, only served, as it always does, to make matters worse. Reconciliation did indeed come by fits and starts, as in presence of a family sorrow or misfortune; there were moments when it seemed almost complete, and it came fully at the end. But then it was too late.

The effect of all this upon Charles was deeper than

most of his friends suspected. Prolonging the tragedy which had begun in the terrible breach with his father, it kept alive in him a sense of contradiction with the world and brought bitterness into the waters of his life, which were naturally sweet. It led him to exaggerate the degree of his isolation from the prevailing Christianity of his time. It is partly responsible for the position he held during the whole of his long ministry on the left wing of ethical theism. His dislike of evangelical theology was intense, and even the faint echoes of it, as they are to be heard in the various "Christo-centric" theories now current, never failed to rouse his instant opposition. It had poisoned his youth and afflicted his manhood, alienating from him the one man in the world he loved most dearly. In 1896 I wrote to him that I thought the mission of the Churches was to mend what was *worst* in the world, and I added something about the penitent thief and the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He was instantly up in arms. "My dear Jacks," he answered, "the penitent thief is certainly deserving of consideration, and blessed is the man who can bring peace to his troubled soul. But you think too much about him. . . . The man of business, the politician, the town councillor, the striving tradesmen are of more importance to the world than the thief and drunkards. . . . The thinkers and workers need to be ministered to as well as the weak and ignorant. . . . All churches are conceited, stubborn, unteachable, and the more so the more orthodox they are. Look at the conceit of the Ritualist, the unteachableness of the Romanist, the stupidity of the Evangelical."

*Extracts from Letters to his Brother*

"I can no longer say that I live in 'hope against hope' of a reconciliation. The chasm between us is

deep and wide, and any planks thrown across it will bend and break. . . . As we reconcile ourselves to losses by death so must we reconcile ourselves to the sad loss of brotherly communion. . . . You separate yourself from me *on principle*. Be it so; but let it be all, so that the distant relations we maintain with one another may, at least, be not mingled with gall. . . . You quite astonished me by speaking of the inconvenience you were occasionally at, in receiving me at your house in past times, and that others had remonstrated with you on the subject. Alas, one lives to learn more and more how unlike the world is to our simple imaginings. . . . Ah, dear brother, how often have I *half* wished that you might be in a position to require help of me! I would soon close the mouths of any who dared to object to my giving it to the best of my ability." (December 20, 1877.)

"As to controversy I can imagine no case in which it would be so hopeless. I believe I am better acquainted with your side polemically than you are. And I know the other sides well. I keep my mind open and read what comes out against my views in the most candid spirit. . . . Controversy with you would make me uneasy; with a R.C. tenfold more than with you. I speak by experience." (December 21, 1877.)

"You have for more than five years suppressed all manifestations of brotherly love. You have treated me as an old, half-forgotten friend. Very unwisely, I think, for my once great love for you was a great influence on my life, and had it continued I should have found great difficulty in accepting my present position. . . . But a love such as few brothers get from brothers, you have wantonly rejected. Very bitter has been the weaning of myself from my nearest and dearest relation, constant companion of so many years, sharer of almost every joy and sorrow, sole partner in so many

precious memories. . . . Seaside and mountain walk, meditation and moonlight quiet have been troubled and spoilt by the persistently recurring thought of you. Now that stage is over. You are as a brother in Australia to me. I have none but friendly feelings towards you—not sore and bitter, as they once were. . . . We are so far asunder in faith, interests, and desires. But let us be good friends. Write to me sometimes. . . . Your eccentric conscientiousness about the ‘Reverend,’ to which I have a right, ecclesiastical, legal, and social, which no one but you disputes, is characteristic. ‘Esquire’ I have no more right to than ‘Baronet.’ Direct simply ‘Mr,’ and I shall be content.”<sup>1</sup> (September 19, 1879.)

“Do you know the great difference between us? It is not that you believe so many things I disbelieve, but this—that you are certain and will not so much as examine the other side. I confessedly hold my views tentatively, admit that men wiser and better than I are opposed to me, and am always ready to read and consider any arguments urged on the other side. . . . That amid the immense diversity of opinion either you or I should have got just the truth and all who differ from us be in error, seems to me an absurd supposition. And I have often said publicly that I pray God we Unitarians in general and my Chapel in particular may be utterly confounded and perish if we are in error. . . . A local Methodist minister speaks of me in a pamphlet as ‘like a cheese-mite, ever busy; aimlessly pulling about the fragments of its spoilt food mingled with its eggs and excrement.’ . . . It is verily ‘woe’ when all men speak well of you. If blessedness is to be earned merely by men’s ill-will, I should certainly have a fair claim to it here. . . . I am but a poor fool, though I don’t like being called so. . . . A few years, dear

<sup>1</sup> It is only fair to Joseph to add that in his reply to this letter, he told Charles that he might address him also as “Mr.” “Let all titles,” he wrote, “be grounded on what men are, not on what they ought to be”—a fine saying.

brother, and we shall both be wiser. Life is certainly half spent for us both. We are probably much nearer the end [than the beginning] and the revelation of the unseen world, about which we dispute and dogmatise and differ so widely, but of which, till the veil of flesh be withdrawn, we know so little." (November 7, 1889.)

## CHAPTER XIII

HIS LIFE IN LEEDS (1876-1912)

I HAVE now told the story of Hargrove's spiritual pilgrimage from authority to freedom—a pilgrimage which had its predisposing causes in character, temperament, personality, and circumstance, as well as in the reason of the pilgrim reflecting on the problem which destiny had assigned him to solve. Having thus brought Hargrove to his goal, my task is wellnigh accomplished.

There is, however, another story to be told about him, covering a period precisely as long as that which the narrative has already traversed. He was thirty-six years of age when he accepted the pulpit of the Mill Hill Chapel. He was seventy-two when he resigned it in 1912. This second half of his life, with its incessant and many-sided activities, might well form the subject of an independent book. But only the essential features of it belong to the story I have to tell. The detailed sequence of events would here be out of place, and the picture would be crowded with too many figures.

Certain questions remain which the reader has the right to ask. What became of this man after he had reached his goal? Did he stay there? Did he show any disposition to retrace his steps? Did freedom become anarchy? What use did he make of it, or what abuse? Did it *work*? Was he satisfied? In short, is the story we have heard an example or a warning?

The last question I will not undertake to answer,

leaving the facts to speak for themselves, and the reader to make his own applications. This he cannot do, however, until the rest have been answered, and for that purpose I write the following sketch of Hargrove's thirty-six years' ministry in Leeds. But first an answer shall be given in his own words. Here is a letter written by him to Dr Bickersteth, then Vicar of Leeds, in answer to one which the latter had sent him when he had resolved to resign his pulpit at Mill Hill.

“5 NEWTON GROVE,  
LEEDS, June 5, 1911.

“MY DEAR VICAR,—I thank you heartily for your kind letter, kinder perhaps than you yourself understood. I have worked for thirty-five years in Leeds, and I have received many marks of public esteem, often more than I deserved. But through all that time I have been a marked man, one with whom men of my own profession would not or dared not associate.

“Among Nonconformists I have, of course, had acquaintances, but never one whom I could call a friend, or who would have cared to recognise me as such. Roman Catholics have, of course, stood aloof from me, and of the clergy with whom my sympathies naturally lay, Cross of Holbeck, and Kennedy of All Saints' were the only ones with whom I have ever been intimate. If I were disposed to complain, I should be checked by the thought that my only brother is ashamed of me, and we are as strangers to one another except for the memory of a common past now far away. But I have no right to complain, and I am not tempted to do so. I learnt long ago that everything has its price, and a man who grumbles at having to pay for what he takes is a fool. Still, it is often hard to bear. I crave for sympathy and communion *in sacris*, and I am debarred from them by my own act. I long to go ‘with the multitude to the House of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with

a multitude keeping holyday.' My heart is with the crowd in the Parish Church, and I am forced to worship with a few excommunicated like myself. For myself, I know I am in the right—I do not mean intellectually, though of course I think so, but morally. I cannot bring myself to regret that I have chosen a position in which I am free to speak what I believe and what I disbelieve, and not bound to use words which conceal my real thoughts. I know, too, that others are right. The matters on which we differ are of literally infinite moment, and those who believe in Trinity and Incarnation, and Atonement ought not to act as if these did not matter, and one who denied was as good as one who accepted them—*cæteris paribus*.

“And yet the *cætera* count for much, as you in all your relation with me have shown, and shown in a way which no predecessor of yours has. I thank you for this latest proof of a sympathy which the widest religious differences have not suffocated.—Yours very truly,  
CHARLES HARGROVE.”

The reader who attentively considers this letter will not be slow to remark in it a trace of what I have elsewhere called “the sense of contradiction with the world.” The letter bespeaks a hypersensitive nature given to self-analysis and not incapable of self-pity. This tendency led Hargrove, I am convinced, to exaggerate his religious isolation. When the signs of good-will are wanting it does not follow that ill-will is intended; but Hargrove, just because he abounded in good-will himself, was apt to misinterpret the lack of its manifestations in others. There were times when it was difficult to persuade him that he was not regarded as an alien even by his fellow-ministers among the Unitarians; but nothing could have been further from the truth. And just as he exaggerated the degree of alienation in his brother's attitude—I think he exaggerates it in the above



letter,—so unconsciously he represented himself as more severely judged by his orthodox neighbours than he really was. Looking through his Leeds sermons, I observe that from time to time he criticised their doctrines somewhat drastically—a circumstance which must have made it very difficult for them to give him official countenance, but did not prevent an Archbishop of York from describing him as an “ideal citizen.” Certainly he was not more exposed to “ostracism” than other Unitarian ministers, though, in consequence perhaps of his past history, he might be less inclined to take it good-humouredly. Writing in his diary after a visit from his friend Canon Body in 1883, he says: “Somehow he left me in a sad mood and bitter. I could not help contrasting his position and my own, and reflecting on what I might be if only I could have fallen in with popular views of Christianity. . . . I am a man whose opinions are, as it were, criminal, excluded from all society save that of the small body who agree with me.” From evidence lying before me, in letters written both before and after his death, I will venture the opinion that he was held in general respect by the clergy in Leeds, much as his polemics tried them at times. He was certainly respected by the laity, whose letters, if anything, are even more explicit. As to his own congregation, it is difficult to find a term sufficiently strong to express the degree of love and veneration in which they held him. They reciprocated the loyalty of his service and marked their devotion to him by many a generous deed. It was a happy relationship.

“I am glad to have been under your ministry for thirty years,” wrote the late Lord Airedale. “You and I have gone through much and done a good deal of work together in that time. You have worked well and loyally for the truth, and you have the esteem and affection of a growing number of friends here and outside. I think the later

years are the best years, as authority is established. It has not to be constantly asserted after one has arrived" (1906).

"For myself I can only say it has so often been blessed rest to follow you in prayer and praise and search for truth. Besides, I have often been thankful that you have permitted me to be uncertain where it would be dishonest to be precise or to define. . . . There *is* light and it *will* come, but it is wrong to assume a jaunty certainty at the glimmering of great discoveries. I have *tried* to be happy elsewhere, but in the free and untrammelled worship at Mill Hill I find my home. Your men and women have done a good deal at Leeds for the commerce which supports the people, for the social life which betters their lot, and for the political life which makes for manhood and for patriotism. We might have done more and been better, and we must try to do more and be better in the years to come" (1896).

"Spurgeon [said] to Mr Gladstone, 'We believe in no man's infallibility, but it is restful to be sure of one man's integrity.' I believe in Charles Hargrove's."

The ideal that he set himself to realise in Leeds was that of the citizen-minister—which, indeed, is a tradition among the Unitarians. In a great provincial city, especially in a Yorkshire city, there are opportunities for this, and a certainty of response which are not to be found in the amorphous life of the Capital. Hargrove seized his opportunity at once. He valued his liberty not only because it made him unfettered by theological dogma in dealing with religious matters, but also because it left him his own judge as to what were religious and what not—a question he had answered in principle in the first sermon he had preached in Leeds by denying the barrier between the sacred and the profane. The Yorkshiremen liked his fearlessness and his downright love of truth; they found him

“fair” as well as trenchant, and easily interpreted his keen analysis into terms of their own “common sense.”

“It is one advantage of growing old,” he wrote to me in 1897, “that unless you are a darned fool, you will be able to estimate pretty well what you are and what you are not, and will have got rid of juvenile conceit. Now I am not ‘a great preacher.’ If anyone tells me otherwise I shall be flattered, but not convinced. There are hundreds as good, there are scores superior. When I read my own printed sermons I am convinced of their mediocre value. They are good enough in their class, but they are not first-class. So much for myself as preacher. Nevertheless I do not hesitate to claim that I have more influence as a preacher than any in Leeds, excepting of course the vicar, who holds a high official position. It is not because of any credit I have for eloquence, or learning, or spirituality, but that I am known to be independent of conventionalities and ecclesiastical interests. In common with many of my brother ministers of higher and lower position, I have always dared to say what I thought. Such freedom would be in grievous peril if we ever got to anything like organisation and [doctrinal] statements.”

During all these years he kept diaries which enable us to recover his outward walk and conversation in all the details of its activity. He was a man in whom the pleasures of memory were exceptionally keen, anxious on the one hand to maintain a *conscious* link between his present and his past, and on the other loath to forget anything he had done, anybody he had met or spoken to. There are men, adventurers by nature, in whom the forward impulse is so strong that they are willing to let their past drop away from them, finding in the past more of an encumbrance than a help: these men seldom keep diaries; they burn their letters, lose their writings, and are untroubled by the thought that the print of their footsteps will be utterly washed out by the

waters of time. There are others, more loyal than adventurous, who are interested in their own past not from conceit but from the love of continuity, from the desire to maintain an *historical* self-consciousness in themselves and in their families. These men keep diaries, and to them Hargrove belonged. He knew, and made no secret of the knowledge, that his past was of interest to others as well as to himself; he knew that, although outwardly broken and disordered, it had an inner unity, and that what he was doing *now* was all of a piece with what he had done *before*; and this it was that led him day after day to write down the day's work.

The drama of his life is not depicted in these later diaries as it was in the earlier; they are for the most part bare records of the names of the actors, of the times and places of their arrival and departure, of what *he* did, of what *they* did. "Footprints" we may call them; but footprints so multitudinous and closely crowded together that they become *paths* indicating lines of direction; which lines of direction, when carefully plotted on the map, will be seen converging to a definite point—"the fulfilment of the substance of his vows." Read one page of them, and you get the impression of a life distracted amid a multitude of duties great and small; and you ask, "O Lord, can these dry bones *live*?" Read a thousand (as I have done), and they stand on their feet, "an exceeding great army," one purpose pervading them all.

We see him engaged in the preparation of an endless succession of sermons,<sup>1</sup> on an endless variety of subjects

<sup>1</sup> Every month for many years he published one of his sermons, sending copies to his friends. Of one of these sermons Canon George Body wrote to him in 1881: "The great joy of the sermon was and is *you*. I can hear your dear voice in it as in the days of 'auld lang syne.' Alas, in the battle of life we have drifted apart. Our deep loyalty to conflicting convictions keeps us so, and must. But, believe me, I never forget you. Of all the friends I ever had—and God has given me many in His love—none has ever been so dear to me as you were. May He bring us home at last to that Haven of Rest, when 'the shadows have fled away:'"

from "The Love of God" to the "Leeds Gas Strike." "Preached morning and evening" are the words at the top of almost every page, occurring like the notes of the big drum repeated at regular intervals in the mingled sounds of an orchestra. Conspicuous too, and so recurrent that the pages may be said to be peppered with it, is the word which more than any other known to me sums up for good or ill the fixed ideas of the modern world—the word "committee." Innumerable are the committees that have to be and *are* attended, punctually and faithfully and to the very end of the sitting, many in Leeds, many others afar off; committees of the C.O.S., of the Children's Holiday Fund, of Temperance Societies,<sup>1</sup> of the Leeds Library, of the Philosophical Society; committees educational, political, religious; of the Council of the University; of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; committees of Manchester College, of Liberal Clubs, of the "Triennial Conference of Free Churches," of Unitarian Associations local and national, large and small. Then there are the "Annual Meetings" of this and that; of societies, churches, and schools all over Yorkshire and the north of England—for we perceive he has now become a kind of bishop in those parts,—all of them anxious to secure "Charles Hargrove" as figurehead and sure guarantee of a good speech; but each forgetting in their importunities upon his time that these affairs, though "annual" to them are of weekly occurrence to him. Annual Sermons, Annual Addresses, Annual Commemorations, yes, and annual "teas," annual "picnics," annual "bean-feasts," and other annual jollifications for the small fry—not far short, when they are all added together, of 365 working days to the year.

Lectures also, whole courses of lectures have to be given—there is no end to them either. Has not this man made

<sup>1</sup> He became an ardent total abstainer in 1900.

his mark as a public lecturer on the poets? "Go to, then," say the committee of the Leeds or other Literary Society, "let us engage him for a course of lectures on Cædmon, on Shakespeare, on Milton; yea, let us appoint him President of our Society." And he permits himself to be engaged or to be appointed. He is in turn or simultaneously President of the Leeds Library, President of the Philosophical and Literary Society, President of the Yorkshire Unitarian Union, President of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association,<sup>1</sup> President of the Triennial Conference, President of I know not what else, giving an appropriate "annual address" to each, and attending the constellation of committees which revolve around it. He takes an eager interest in the work of the Thoresby Society and becomes President of that also in 1912; for he is a skilled student of local antiquities, of family records, of stone and other monuments; in which employment, I am informed, he rendered a signal service to his fellow-citizens, by helping them to understand the rock from which they were hewn and the hole of the pit whence they were digged.

Colleges and institutions all over the country have their eye on him. There is Manchester College, Oxford, of which he is a "Visitor" and whose Principal, Dr Carpenter is lamenting that Hargrove's scholarship is not put more widely to the use. "Will you not therefore come over to Oxford and give us a course of lectures on the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas? For who among us save you and Philip Wicksteed is at home in the Scholastic Philosophy?" And Hargrove "comes over," thereby adding to his weekly burden not only the preparation of the lectures, which he finds "a nightmare," but two days "wasted in the train." I note

<sup>1</sup> "Dear Laddie," wrote Robert Collyer from New York when this appointment was made, "I was glad they made thee President, and I said, 'Yes, he is the best man for the place.'"

also a course of lectures on the Fourth Gospel at University Hall in London, with great projects thence arising of a book on that subject, disproving the Johannine authorship, among other things : projects never completed, though often re-started—which is to be greatly lamented.

Here, too, is the editor of *Hibbert Journal* plaguing him with importunities to write an article on St Dominic, of whom as an ex-Dominican he must needs know something to the point—which he agrees to do, dutifully immersing himself in Bollandus and other authorities, but soon gets horribly bored, and finally throws it up on the ground that St Dominic “was a very ordinary Saint”—one more witness of the immense distance he has traversed since the days at Santa Sabina.

In the intervals of his longer peregrinations among all towns and cities where Unitarianism has raised its heretical head, we see him flitting about incessantly, on foot or in tramcars, on his pastoral and other visitations, threading his way through the smoke-blackened streets, emerging into the open suburbs where the wealthy members of his flock have their habitations, and then diving into the plentiful slums, those characteristic products of modern civilisation ; to return home “in time for supper,” but in no mood for his Sunday preparations, the last experience of the day having made him “sick, angry, and dejected,” wondering whether he, Charles Hargrove, has any right to his modest home.

Beneath all this, and mingling with it, we observe his great love of souls. To him men were always *individuals*, to be taken one by one, and each revered as an end in himself, an incarnate enigma it may be, but a son of God none the less. He held Blake’s doctrine of the “Minute Particular,” and rejected with scorn all theories and vast generalisations which treat mankind as a bundle of faggots.

All this showed itself in many ways : in the assiduity with which he visited the sick and the dying, in his care for the young people of his flock, in the quickness of his sympathy for the bereaved and the unfortunate, witnessed by scores of treasured letters, and, above all, in the persistence of his search after the particular lost sheep. Of this last let the following, written by a working man, stand in proof :—

“To your teaching and the faith which it has inspired I owe the strength which was given me not to go under in all my troubles. I shall not look back again, but live and work in the hope that you will some day be proud to remember that another one has been added to the long list of those who have led altered lives and persevered to the end.”

Thus year after year this citizen-minister went on his way, preaching, lecturing, presiding, annual-addressing, committeeing, visiting, baptizing, marrying, burying, consoling—in brief, helping his fellow-man by word and deed in every way which his powers and his office rendered possible to him. Through the 'seventies, the 'eighties, the 'nineties, and then into the present century it goes on, the only difference being that as time advanced there is more of it and ever more.

Yet, in spite of the incessant and ever-multiplying calls of duty, his life was far from being a grind, nor was there anything grim in his soul. He was not of those who go through the world “lashed and persecuted by the categorical imperative.” *Perfatigatus* he still was, but from a different cause, and his sleep was sweeter than of old. Of sport he had no knowledge, nor any inclination to it, but a gayer companion was not to be found. The fruits of the spirit in him were righteousness, peace, and joy—and joy, I think, most of all. At home he was full of fun and would give



himself up to it entirely when on his holidays, as wise men often do. There are before me certain nonsense diaries composed by him and his children on their many expeditions, and most excellent fooling they are. Would that leisure had been given him to develop that vein—not to speak of others equally precious! The humour of a man who in the essence of him takes life very seriously, having tasted its bitter cups, who smiles with lips that bear the stigmata of suffering at their corners, is the best humour of all.

But leisure, in the large sense, was never his. It is not wonderful that in circumstances such as I have described he wrote none of the books he had it in him to write. Sad indeed must his thoughts often have been, when the old “yearnings for a student’s life” awoke within him. But if you go to Leeds and ask his friends and the members of his congregation, “What did this man do, and what memorial has he left of himself under the sun?” they will point you first to their church and its institutions; next to the public life of their city in all the variety of its political, social, educational, and philanthropic work; and then, looking round on one another, they will give you a long list of men and families, naming them one by one, and tell you that these were they whom Charles Hargrove sustained for thirty-six years in the pursuit of a noble ideal. “*Si monumentum quæris,*” they will say, “*circumspice.*”

Though there was no leisure there were some interludes. In 1900 he went with his wife to America, at the invitation of the Boston Unitarians (“annual-sermons” once more), not to find rest but to be appalled at “the maelstrom of activities” into which his radiant hosts immediately plunged him. Here he saw much of his old friend Robert Collyer, once a Yorkshire blacksmith, afterwards the preacher most beloved among American Unitarians. Four years later he went, again with his wife, on a preaching

tour<sup>1</sup> to the Antipodes, and found among the open-minded colonists a reception which amounted almost to a triumph—one of the happiest episodes of his life—large and eager audiences waiting for him everywhere. On his return he had an amusing adventure. Crossing the Pacific the steamer stopped at one of the Samoan islands, and Hargrove, having gone ashore, found on his return to the landing-place that the steamer had sailed. For three weeks he and his wife were marooned on the island. Of all of which he gave a charming account in a little volume published on his return, called *Letters Home*.

He took most of his holidays in England, but when cash was forthcoming he would go to the Continent, to France, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, or to the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau. An interesting letter referring to a holiday in Rome has reached me from the Rev. H. A. Kennedy, Vicar of Abingdon,<sup>2</sup> one of his many friends among the clergy of the Church of England. Incidentally it reveals the general nature of these friendships. "Our friendship," writes Mr Kennedy, "was in one sense rather remarkable, as we had travelled on opposite paths. I had been brought up a Unitarian, he an Evangelical in the first stage, and we used to be able to talk about our present positions and experiences without any controversy. There is one very interesting conversation which always remains in my mind, as an indication of his intense honesty and candour. When he had been twenty-five years at Mill Hill the congregation gave him a present which enabled him to spend some time in Rome. He had never been there since he had been a Dominican at Santa Sabina; and on his return he told me how he had been rather afraid (the word

<sup>1</sup> He went as "delegate of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association to the Unitarians of Australia and New Zealand."

<sup>2</sup> Late Vicar of All Saints', Leeds.

he used) as to what would be the effect of the old associations, but that the anxiety soon passed away ; for he found the popular religion of Rome so entirely different from anything he had experience of in the monastery."

Of his inner life during his Leeds ministry only occasional glimpses are afforded by the diaries. Meagre as they are, they reveal essentially the man we have learned to know in the earlier period, self-questioning, self-distrustful, an enigma to himself, but resolutely following his star. The following is a characteristic entry of this kind, written on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his settlement in Leeds :—

" 1901

" 'Lest by any means I have run in vain,' one fourth of a century, the greater part of most lives, the best part of almost every life contained in it. By me spent as minister. By what I have done in it my life is to be judged. Has it been in vain ?

" Is it false doctrine I have preached ? Or is it all baseless conjectures, possibilities asserted for facts ? Should I have been doing right to have continued a zealous priest, or dedicated my talents to the Church or Evangelical ministry ? Or rather to have given myself to education and employed my capacities as a teacher ?

" I go back to starting-point, and review the ways I might have travelled these twenty-five years.

" Shall I try argument or trust to assurance ? But I have learnt the vanity of both. I just accept the fact ; I have made no choice. I have been what I have because I could be no other. Men every way as good are different. My creed has been, I believe, in God. All else subsidiary. I could do no less and no more."

"I could do no less and no more"—in this assurance his life passed on to the end. A man who had thrice

exposed himself to the threat of eternal perdition and survived it; first by the Evangelicals when he became a Romanist; then by the Romanists when he left them; then by both the Evangelicals and Romanists when he became a Unitarian; a man therefore who during the greater part of his life stood under condemnation, according to one theology or another, as a lost soul. Through all this he was suffered to pass unmolested by the Higher Powers; no bolt from heaven was launched against him; there was nothing to indicate that he was under the wrath of God. On him as on other men the sun shone and the rain fell without discernible difference. The period of his life which official theology would pronounce the most offensive was the longest, the most fruitful, and the happiest of the three. It was also the last. Undisturbed by outward calamity and richly blessed with the love of wife, children, and friends he lived on to a ripe old age, saw the harvest of his labours, and died in peace.

## CHAPTER XIV

### HIS LIFE IN LEEDS—THE INNER SIDE

SURELY the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor has a universal significance. Dante's Beatrice, the Fool in *Lear*, the Vicar of Wakefield, Tess of the D'Urbervilles—to mention four among thousands—are all transfigurations of our common humanity. Had we met the originals as they walked the earth, the chances are that we should have passed them by with little remark—"a pretty girl," "an odd fellow," "a good old man." There are many homely figures of this kind, carpenters' sons or millers' daughters, whose casual appearance reveals nothing out of the ordinary, but who, when withdrawn to some mountain-top of memory or of thought, and steadfastly gazed upon and more intimately known, are miraculously transfigured before us, so that their faces shine like the sun and their homespun garments become whiter than any fuller on earth can white them; while "Moses" and "Elijah," or what names we will from the company of the immortals, appear on either hand and seem to be "talking with them." And not men only, but whole cities, nay the whole frame of nature, may be thus transvalued, and *are* so, whenever the mind dwells steadfastly on the object before it and meditation sinks into the profoundest deeps; else had the City of God been hidden for ever. Not always must "the cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces" of the poet's vision yield to the brutal smoke-grimed fact; there is

also the reverse process when the brutal smoke-grimed fact yields and dissolves itself in them. Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, London, New York, and the rest—there is that in the look and fashion of these places, as seen by the eye of sense, that reminds us of some misbegotten birth, and may even seem to stamp them as the devil's own; but *within* them is an inner illumination, a human secret, a Divine Incarnation perhaps, which bridges them to the heavenly places. What visions meet us when thought has passed the bridge may be read in Plato, in St Augustine, and in him who wrote of the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven like a bride adorned for her husband. Nothing visible is understood until it is thus transfigured.

This thought has recurred again and again as I have followed the footsteps of Charles Hargrove and sought to visualise the life that he led in his Leeds environment. This black-coated Unitarian minister rushing about to fulfil his "engagements," or holding forth his "views" twice a Sunday to the congregation of Mill Hill Chapel—what is there about him or his doings, more than about any other of the thousands of black-coated figures who move hither and thither on the crowded stage of modern life, that we should bestow upon him more than a passing glance? His heresies are not very striking; they are shared by millions of "professing Christians" who call themselves by other names, and are, after all, but a mild form of the general heresy prevalent in these days. And was he a personality so outstanding that the world must needs be asked to gaze upon it? Let the utmost that can be said about his abilities, his earnestness, his long devotion to duty, his personal charm, be taken for granted. Did he in all this differ so widely from multitudes of good ministers of religion of whom no memorial exists or will ever be asked for?

To what is implied by these questions I can myself most readily subscribe. But then I could subscribe to them in the same terms for anybody else. There is a point of view from which no man is worthy of a biography. *Classify* him : say, for example, that he was “an earnest and devoted Unitarian minister,” and all that needs to be further said about him can be put into a dozen general propositions, and even they may be found too many. It is only when men are *transfigured* that they are worth writing about. Till then they are all commonplace, if not despicable. Were it otherwise we should never have heard of the Prodigal Son, or the thief on the cross, or Mary Magdalene, or the woman who threw two mites into the treasury. On some men’s lives you may gaze for a long time, and nothing will reveal itself beyond what appearance shows. Others display their ultimate values the moment they are isolated in thought ; in a flash they are out of all classifications, and we see them unique—“walking in an air of glory whose light doth trample all our days.” The reader will judge for himself. I, who have followed Hargrove step by step in his journey up this mountain, have seen his black coat more than once suddenly change into shining raiment ; as I have often seen on other journeys with men who wore yet humbler garb than he.

The life of a hard-worked Unitarian minister, with its many-sided excursions into the realm of good works, is perhaps as useful a form of life as is permitted to man among the things that are seen and temporal. Whether its utilities extend into the more real world, which is unseen and eternal, is a question on which theologians have profoundly differed, some contending that its usefulness in this world only serves to emphasise its deficiencies as regards the next. Into this question it is no part of my present purpose to enter. Whatever the right answer may be, it is certain that the

life in question contains little to catch the eye which is on the lookout for exciting adventures. Considered as a transaction in space and time, its incidents are not spectacular and its movement is not dramatic. It is, indeed, too busy to be dull, and too useful to be unrewarded, but its dramas are inward and hidden. All the eye of the spectator can see is the traffic of duty going forth upon her errands, which multiply continually without changing their essential form. An endless procession of sermons marches across the foreground of the stage, about each one of which there is, no doubt, a story to be told, but a story to which the world would not listen, and which perhaps it could not understand. In the background we behold a multitude of figures busied about many things and clothed in the grey garments of daily work. In vain do we look there for the bright colours of romance, or for the signs that portend the coming clash of mighty opposites, of which there were so many in the earlier periods of Hargrove's life.

Such at least is the impression I receive from reading his diaries during the long years of his Leeds ministry. There is no "scenery" and hardly any colour in these bare but amazing records of duty done, year in, year out. We are, in fact, *in Leeds*; and the life of this citizen-minister is, as it should be, of one piece with the life of the city in which he dwells. We catch the stir of its dim population; we feel its grey skies over us in the daytime, and see them at night lit up by countless artificial lights and by the glare of many forges; we hear the footsteps of a vast multitude going forth to its work and to its labour until the evening; the roar of traffic; the din of stations; the grind and rattle of the passing trams; the thunder of the Scotch express as it plunges on its way past the ruins of Kirkstall Abbey. Into this tumultuous life Hargrove, once a dweller within convent walls, has now entered and found salvation in



making himself a living part of it ; seeking to guide it, by such lights as are now given him and as far as one man is able, to the City which hath foundations and is in heaven. This, I think, is the meaning that lies hidden beneath the bare matter-of-fact as it is recorded, year after year, in the pages of his diaries—the trains caught, the meetings attended, the resolutions moved, the speeches made, the sermons delivered. This, too, is the secret of his unswerving devotion to Mill Hill and its people, from whom he can, so long as strength remains to him, by no manner of means tear himself away—turning a deaf ear to all overtures, whether secret or public, from other congregations, from the High Pavement Church in Nottingham, from the Church of the Messiah in Birmingham : to say nothing of a suggestion, emanating from Leeds itself, that he should become Professor of English in the Yorkshire College there established. Very beautiful and noteworthy is this loyalty of the shepherd to his flock as it shines out upon us from every page of these diaries—now leading his sheep beside the still waters, now guarding them against the robber or the wolf. May we not say without hesitation that a man who has *that* virtue will not be found wanting in others—not at least in those which gave him his passport into the kingdom of God ? And so indeed we find it to be. Many are the indications of the gentle heart which lie scattered up and down these pages. No “hating” of wife and children for him ; nor of brethren, nor of friends. Across the fields of his duty, often bleak and wintry enough, we discern the warm lights of his home beckoning the tired labourer when his day’s work is done ; and, drawing nearer, we see the hearth fire burning clear and bright faces on the watch for his coming. “O God,” he writes on January 1, 1898, “I am too happy ! Blessed beyond my utmost deserts in love of many kinsfolk and friends.”

Here, for example, I find him attending a more than usually portentous "conference" with all the train-catchings, lunch-eatings, and resolution-movings duly noted and catalogued. For a whole week he is engaged in these exercises, in which a protagonist's part has been assigned him, plunged in a wordy war of minds, and noting with some sorrow of heart the mutual paralysis to which good men reduce each other on these occasions. Then he comes home, doubting greatly "if he has learned anything," but "thank God, the children were waiting for me on the Leeds platform and received me with shrieks of joy and open arms." On another occasion—though the evidence for this is not in the diaries—I see him in a crowded railway carriage with his friend Mr Grosvenor Talbot, returning, I think, from some local parliament of the same kind, Hargrove in exuberant spirits, which, however, have nothing to do with the "conference" he has just left behind him. Mr Talbot opens the campaign with a humorous story, which taps the corresponding vein in Hargrove, always rich and ready to flow. These two between them make high mirth until, the train arriving in Leeds, the whole company tumbles out of the carriage with aching sides. Which episodes are most reassuring in a life such as his.

But if we look in vain for dramatic situations in this later record, equally vain will be our search for what the world counts as great achievement. This, after weighing the evidence before me, I cannot but count as a thing to be lamented, as a thing that need not have been. There is not a doubt that Hargrove possessed an extraordinarily acute and subtle intellect, mainly, it is true, of the analytical type, but corrected by a broad humanism which would have saved him from the chief dangers and diseases incident to that class of minds. He was perhaps better fitted, both by training and temperament, than any other man of his time

to recover and interpret to English thinkers the immense treasures of scholastic philosophy. Combined with his special knowledge in this department, and with his general power of philosophical analysis, he possessed a highly developed historical sense, which in him was a gift of nature. His work on the Fourth Gospel, delivered in the form of lectures at Mrs Humphry Ward's request in London in 1892, reveal critical powers equally remarkable for fairness, penetration, and philosophic breadth. It is much to be regretted that the circumstances of his life did not permit him to make full use of so rare a combination of gifts.

His devotion, through the latter half of his life, to Mill Hill and to the cause which Mill Hill represented, cannot be too highly praised, and no one will grudge his flock the fruits of a loyalty so remarkable. Responsibility for the inhibition under which he lay does not attach to that or to any other particular group of persons. It belongs rather to the general conditions of a confused and fevered age. The world of our day is not making the right use of its best men. It allows them little time for that prolonged meditation without which the spiritual fires cannot burn with their purest flame. It worries them with ceaseless importunities to fritter away their energies on things of lesser moment. It pesters them with unnecessary correspondence and, thanks to its belief that speech-making rules the course of events, it leads them in a dance from platform to platform, thereby forcing them to express themselves far more than is good either for them or their hearers. Under this treatment the highest powers are denied their needed opportunity for self-collection, and, in consequence, seldom ripen to their full maturity.

That this demoralising process, so characteristic of our age and so fatal to great achievement, is more active in the Unitarian community than elsewhere I am not in a position

to assert ; but a glance into Hargrove's diaries is enough to prove that there, as elsewhere, the process was sufficiently active to make prolonged concentration wellnigh impossible. Want of concentration was, indeed, one of Hargrove's natural failings, and certainly his Unitarian environment did not help him to overcome it. The Unitarian churches worked him for all they could get out of him ; they worked him too variously, and they worked him too much. It was the penalty of his outstanding gifts, but a penalty as much against their interest to enforce as it was against his to pay. He did them great service, catching their spirit and adapting himself to their needs with a facility that was surprising, but if they could have agreed among themselves to cancel half the engagements he had made to them, and to leave him alone to the extent of half their importunities, he would have done them greater service still. No man who is doing what he believes to be his duty can be said to be wasting his time ; but this rule, so true in the abstract, needs the sense of proportion in the application of it. It is clearly misapplied when duty takes the form of doing whatever a clamorous public demands, or when the man in question is capable of great duties, while those he is asked to perform are mostly little ones. This is the pathetic element in Hargrove's diaries. They reveal to us a mind ambitious of great achievement and capable of it ; but overwhelmed and distracted by a multitude of petty calls upon his time, a man to whom peace was essential but to whom peace was not given. In one sense he was free ; in another he was caught in a net. *Hinc ille iræ ; hinc ille lachrymæ.* He knew how it was with him ; and many a moan, breaking the dry record of his "engagements," bears witness to his sense that the freedom he had found was not in all respects the freedom for which his soul was hungry. That such things are common makes them no whit the less pathetic.

Most assuredly Hargrove had his full share, pressed down and running over, of the "lowly duties" which provide salutary discipline for all of us, and not least for those who believe themselves destined for "higher work." Nevertheless, the reader of these diaries will have to remind himself pretty often of George Herbert's well-known lines<sup>1</sup> if he would become entirely reconciled to the state of things which is here revealed. Opening the diary for 1895 at random, I find the following, a fair specimen of the whole :—

"January 14.—Sat from 9.30 to 12.30 at the C.O.S. to receive applications for soup-tickets from parents."

"January 16.—To Pudsey to take Mr . . . £5 given me by Henry Lupton for his sick wife."

"January 18.—C.O.S. from 3.30 to 6.15."

"January 19.—Sunday School annual tea-party at Hunslet."

"January 20.—Preached on the easy yoke of Christ." Remembering that the intellect which was thus employed was one of the finest in a community of half a million, I cannot fully persuade myself that his fellow-men were making the best possible use of Charles Hargrove, nor do I believe that he found his yoke quite as easy as the subject of his sermon might suggest.

Still, we must not forget that in all these things he deemed himself to be fulfilling "the substance of his vows," and there is no denying that in that high resolution he was quitting himself like a man. Was he still thinking of the text which in the old days of his convent life he had written out in large letters and kept displayed "where he might always see it"—still thinking of it, but with the emphasis now transferred to another clause: "If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, *yea and his own life also*, he cannot be my disciple"? To the most casual

<sup>1</sup> "Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws  
Makes that and th' action fine."

observer it must be clear as day that Hargrove, in spite of all his Unitarian heresies, his expositions of the fallacies of the Atonement, his criticisms of the Incarnation, his sermons on Trinity Sunday, and such-like offences against official creeds, was in his own manner crucified with Christ and loyal to the doctrine of the Cross. That high mystery still dominated his actions—sent him out to Pudsey with Mr Henry Lupton's five-pound note in his pocket, made him merry with the children at the Hunslet tea-party, and sat with him at the C.O.S., while he gave out the soup-tickets from "9.30 to 12.30" and from "3.30 to 6.15." "Do you never think of the blue cross tattooed on your arm?" wrote his Catholic friend from Trinidad in 1872; "they don't want to see *that* in hell." Yes, he often thought of it; and by this time he believed himself to have discovered what it meant. There is a sermon of his written about this time on the text "If Thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross." "Ah, but that is precisely what a son of God *cannot* do. And the world is always wondering why."

"Left Oxford at 8.45," he writes on February 8, "and arrived in Leeds at 3, to be immediately summoned to Town Hall meeting about distress. Got home 6.30, and set to on my sermons to have to-morrow free. [Next day] 9 to 3.30, Distress Fund, giving indiscriminate relief in crypt of Town Hall. An unsatisfactory and wearying day—but better than doing nothing." Yes, far better!

The interest of these diaries does not emerge until we begin to read them between the lines. They are, for the most part bare—milestones along the road rather than pictures of the country travelled through. He constantly meets and sometimes spends whole days in the company of persons of whom we would fain know his impressions. But their portraits are not painted, and their conversations

are not recorded. Either he lacked the power of summing up a personality in a phrase, or he did not choose to exercise it in writing these pages. I am inclined to think that he was restrained by the dread of doing injustice to others; for it was ever a cardinal principle with him to speak ill of no man, his charity in that particular being most remarkable. "Take people as you find them, and be kind and loving, and don't suspect anything. It is displeasing to a gracious loving God." These, which were the dying words of his father, he has copied out at the end of his diary for 1895, the fullest of all the diaries of this period; and I cannot but think that they are intended to indicate the restraint under which the whole had been written. Such reticence we must respect, though we may regret that it leaves so many interesting questions unanswered. I doubt in any case if Hargrove would have excelled in this kind of portraiture. His mind was too analytical in its methods to be capable of those sudden synopses of human character which are revealed to great artists in the small detail of a man's action, and sometimes even by a gesture. He would have asked himself "*Why*"—as he did in regard to everything,—and in seeking the reason for what had happened, for the word or the deed, he would have missed its secret, and the vision would have passed him by.

His reticence about others extends to himself, in which respect we note a contrast between the diaries of the later and of the earlier periods. It is precisely what we should expect from one whose life, after so many hesitations, false starts, and sudden drawbacks, had at last become "a going concern," a life where immersion in duty leaves little time for the contemplation of the ego. Gleams of his inner life do, nevertheless, from time to time flash out. Of these I will now collect some specimens, all taken from the diaries of 1890 to 1898, the zenith period of Hargrove's life.

The reader will find in them much of the evidence on which the present chapter has been based.

*From the Diary of 1890*

“September 21.—[Birth of his daughter Aphra.] My little one, perhaps some day you will read this diary begun the day of your birth, and know how you were received reverently and gladly to my love as a treasure beyond price. Mother was disappointed that it was not a boy. I cared little which it might be : it was my child. O my darling children, I have loved you all with more than a father’s love and would give my life to gain a happier life for you. Love each other, and be faithful to each other for my sake through good and evil, whatever betide.”

“September 24.—How comes it that no woman, so far as I know, has ever been known as a commentator on classical or even Scripture authors ?”

“November 18.—Lecture at Belgrave Chapel by Guinness Rogers on Cardinal Newman. Very well given, but wanting in the broad culture which was so rare among the older Nonconformists. Oh, if Newman, or Ingersoll, had been on the platform !”

1891

“January 21.—Went to hear the Rev. R. F. Horton’s address to ‘Business Men.’ Very earnest and touching and queerly unpractical. Much about the ‘exceeding preciousness of Jesus’ and ‘how He grows upon you.’ . . . Dined with Professor Bryce at the Club.”

“February 1.—[Preached on] the Fall of Idolatry. To my mind a grand sermon on a grand subject, but I couldn’t find that anyone appreciated it. More and more it is clear to me that I am out of place in a Unitarian congregation. My real supporters are from outside.”



“February 10.—Literary and Philosophical Lecture on Buddha . . . effectively though not intentionally holding up Gotama to ridicule and contrasting him most unfairly with Jesus.”

“April 22.—Sermon at St James Hall by Stopford Brooke, to the effect that there were just five points to be received on faith and above reason—which curiously happened to be just the five in which Stopford Brooke most firmly believed.”

1892

“January 1.—Midnight. Stars bright above save when now and again the squalls obscure them and all is dark and wet. Even such my life and moods and prospects. Thank God for the brightness. Thank God, too, for the storm clouds which I would not be without experience of.”

“July 23.—Thirty years to-day since I ‘went over to Rome,’ crossing from my old church and home associations to a strange country in which I was to dwell for ten years and not return ever to the old one, but to quite another scarcely less remote [from the first].”

“August 27.—By myself to hear Mrs Besant lecture on Theosophy. Catholic truth and heretical nonsense, in the true sense of the words, the former preponderating.”

“December 29.—Funeral of my dear friend and comrade John Lupton, in the frost and fog. . . . More deeply affected by this than by any funeral I have officiated at.”

1893

“June 15.—Addis<sup>1</sup> came to see me. I tried to understand his singular position. But I failed. Yet in spite of

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. W. E. Addis, then in the Unitarian ministry. He, too, had been a priest in the Church of Rome. Later on he left the Unitarians and became Vicar of All Saints', Ennismore Gardens.

our differences about everything, politics, literature, religion, I liked and esteemed him."

"December 31.—A year of long sunshine such as I never remember before. . . . This my calling as a minister of free religion . . . how difficult to maintain. This my part in Leeds: to be truly God-revering but free of all superstition and prejudice. A great place which I hold unworthily."

1894

"March 23.—Good Friday. Preached on the Crucifixion as a lesson of dying. After dinner walked by myself miserably to Horsforth. . . . My life wasted! Mistake on mistake! And who knows if it is not another mistake—my present position in an unsuccessful Church<sup>1</sup>?"

"November 13.—Supper at Mather's, to meet Sir Wemyss Reid. Told us how Gladstone's unkindness had driven Schnadhorst mad. They had all counted on a majority of 100 or 120 at the last election, and he would not guarantee over 145. . . . The prophet bearing the blame of the event."

1895

"April 24.—Anniversary of my first Mass at Carpentras twenty-six years ago. Oh, if then I could have foreseen my 'apostasy' and marriage in vision, with what horror it would have filled my soul! May it not be even so of the future yet before me in the body or out of the body, that what I should dread if I knew it now will prove in the event altogether for my good."

1896

"November 9.—Address at the Clergy House on 'Organisation of Charity.' My first meeting with Church people as such since I came to Leeds."

<sup>1</sup> He refers to a general movement, not to a particular congregation.

1897

“May 21.—Cambridge. Breakfasted with Rose at Emmanuel and met Sale. Sat in the College garden and then sallied out in cap and gown, as thirty-five years ago, to the University Library, where I looked up Petavius. To try for admission of women to degrees while a mob of undergraduates yelled and threw fireworks and flour-bags from outside the rails. Met Rust, whom I had not seen for twenty-two years.

“October 8.—To Peterborough . . . had two hours in the Cathedral, wondering all the time at the strange fate which has made of me a Dissenting minister.”

1898

“April 23.—[In Rome]. Left to myself I went by the Via dei Circhi to Santa Sabina, my heart beating fast as I approached. Found the convent transformed into a hospital for infectious diseases. Nobody being about and the gate open, I went into the well-known garden, and made my way into the macchia, which was alone unchanged. Then, escaping quickly lest I should be recognised, stood at the old gate and rang and went into the old Church, where for three years I prayed!”

“April 25.—To Hadrian’s Villa, a relief from the overwhelming associations of yesterday’s scenes.”

“May 1.—With the Clephans to Shelley’s grave and Keats’! To Santa Sabina, and finally to the Feast of the Santo Bambino at Ara Cœli—an idolatry which would have revolted me if any yearnings Romewards had been awakened at Santa Sabina.”

“July 29.—To Southampton, where I spent the day with Father Limerick and his wife. With the former I last

parted at Santa Sabina. . . . Thank God, I came out when I did."

"December 5.—Birmingham. Went with Byng Kenrick to the Art Gallery, where I saw for the first time two supreme pictures—Holman Hunt's 'Christ in the Temple' and Burne Jones's 'The Merciful Knight.'"

## CHAPTER XV

### LETTERS TO HIS CHILDREN

#### *To his Son in Cambridge*

“November 1, 1900.

“*Richard Feverel* is one of the few books I have read twice. I am amused to see that you agree with your late Head Master as against me on the merits of chapter xx., but you may think very differently when a little older. To me it is the finest piece of prose poetry I have ever met with. But I like to have your own judgments, and much prefer your differing from me to your echoing my views or anybody else’s.

“But don’t use the word ‘artificial’ as a reproach. That’s cant. All the world’s best and most beautiful things are artificial, works of art. Even nature is only appreciated by man’s trained intellect, by art.

“Your notes about services and sermons and religious subjects are very interesting to me. I want to see you develop in the way natural to you—by your own art, not by mine.

“Do read *The New Age*. If you don’t care for it for its own sake, it should interest you as exactly representing your father’s bitterness of soul.”

“November 19, 1900.

“I was very glad Campbell-Bannerman spoke out as he did last Thursday. We lost the election of ’95 through party quarrels, and we lost credit with the country this year through weak attempts to skim our gravest differences.

The *D.N.* had a very strong article against C. B., but really the Liberal Imperialists are very much more nearly allied to Unionists than to us. I have no doubt many would be glad to go over, but it is a difficult thing to do gracefully, and especially when the party to which you would go is in the majority, doesn't care for your adherence, and doesn't want any more claimants for office.

"I am sorry Stead uses language which goes beyond the facts, for it weakens his case. It is absurd to compare our troops<sup>1</sup> with Huns, but they have done worse than the Germans did in France, and they have clearly violated the terms of the Hague Convention. It is a fierce advocate of the war who writes in the *P.M.G.* that the Boer prisoners will find on their return that nine out of ten of their farms are burnt. It is the Liberal *W.G.* which speaks of the need of adopting General Weyler's methods, methods which led to the interference of the U.S. and the loss of Cuba to Spain. Oh, what devil was it who prompted Kruger to declare war? What utter madness, unless he had promise of foreign help, and that does not seem probable!"

"February 10, 1901.

"It is so easy to be extravagant without ever meaning it, and many a one has come a sad cropper all through inattention to money matters. I have no fault to find with you up to the present time, none at least such as I was myself guilty of from my first term onwards: but I want to spare you the misery of exceeding your means as I did. All you spend has to be saved one way or another at home, for we have no surplus income.

"Oh my dear boy, I do covet your entire confidence. It was this your grandfather never encouraged me to give, and great was the loss to us both. I want to know *all* you are thinking, doing, imagining, contriving, your troubles and difficulties if you have any. I cannot bear the thought that you should have secrets from me as I had from my father. But I had the excuse that he was a man of violent

<sup>1</sup> In the South African war.

temper, and I was mortally afraid of him. You have no cause to be afraid of me, I love you too entirely. You are as another self, and if you told me of some fault you had committed I should feel as if it were mine own. This for the future—as long as we both live. I am not writing as if I suspected you of any fault now. I only want to be clear how your money is going, for it is not easy to keep up the supply. Do you know I had £5 a term, and no more. It was too little.”

“February 16, 1901.

“You say you are glad to have found a name for yourself, but it’s not so easily done. First, ‘Deist’ is already taken and become obsolete. It is an eighteenth-century word, and the God of the eighteenth century has long ceased to be ‘the Supreme Being’ of man’s worship. The ‘Theist’ has succeeded to the ‘Deist,’ and the ‘Infinite Spirit’ to the ‘Great Architect.’ Then the name is indefinite. We are all Theists who are not Agnostics or Atheists. What *kind* are you? I call myself a Christian Theist because as a matter of history the God I believe in comes to me through Christ and Christianity: and I am a Unitarian Theist in contradistinction to those who assert that there are three persons in God.”

“February 24, 1901.

“About Religion and Death I have been thinking, and my mind is not yet clear. The fact is the abolition of Death implies necessarily a wholly different scheme of things to any we know of. Birth implies Death. Growth implies Decay. The passing of Time implies an end of Time. A deathless world would be one when all things were always the same, flowers, fruits, leaves, birds, insects, men. It is inconceivable. A deathless world must therefore be a spirit world, where the elements of corruption do not enter. If we were disembodied spirits, should we feel the need of religion? That is really your problem, and it cannot be answered easily. . . .

“I have been reading Æschylus’ *Seven against Thebes*.

If I had been taught Greek better, I should have been an enthusiast for it. I am struck with the sincere devotion of those whom we call 'heathen.' They didn't pray to One God only as we do, or to Three as others do, or to saints and angels; but their prayers were in substance like ours, and it is foolish to imagine that the Infinite Spirit is particular about the names we call Him by, or the ideas we have about His nature."

"February 28, 1901.

"It seems strange now when I recall how little I had to do when you were a baby, but the calls upon a man increase with his credit, and his credit with his age. So that he has most to do when he is beginning to feel the effects of years.

"I am glad you have come upon Swinburne's *Atalanta*. Of longer things he has written nothing better. Of shorter some very charming. A great mass in which it has always seemed to me that there was more sound than sense.

"We have had company to dinner four days in succession. Mr Lummis, Mr Fripp, Mrs J. R. Green, and Mr Wicksteed. All intelligent and all mad against the war.

"The only comfort under present circumstances is that the minority who stand out for humanity and good sense is so large. At the time of the Crimean War—now unanimously condemned—a few Quakers stood alone in opposition. Now *we* are a great host, though terrorised into silence by the unscrupulous violence of the majority.

"But it is maddening to think of all the folly of the last five years and the immense misery which has come of it. Look at to-day's news, and remember that De Wet would have surrendered last May if only personal liberty for himself and his men had been guaranteed. We are spending money and shedding blood ever since to be able to boast in the end that we have reduced an army of farmers to 'unconditional surrender'! Are men sane?"



“May 3, 1901.

“Your mother is much given, my dear boy, to the impossible exercise of contemplating things as they are not, and imagining how much better they would be than as they are. It is not a peculiarity of hers, for I suppose no one who thinks at all—and let us hope for their own sake that most people don't, or they would find life quite intolerable—imagine an omnibus horse thinking of his life! and how little better is the life of the human toiler!—no one, I say, who thinks, but does at times regret the rigidity of circumstances, which are not at all made to suit him and further his comfort, but just are what they are: as indifferent to him as weather, which rarely is all he could wish, generally a good deal wanting, and often enough most objectionable.”

“November 2, 1901.

“I am very miserable about this war. Did I exaggerate when I told H—— this afternoon that probably there was not one happy home in all South Africa, unless it were perhaps to be found in parts of Natal? But that an intelligent man could make the assertion believing it true, is proof to what a terrible pass things have come. Now the *Times* disclaims all responsibility for the inmates of the concentration camps—whatever happens, it says in effect, even if all the children die, it is no fault of ours. It is all horrible, a few years ago we should have said impossible.

“I had to go to —— this morning, having had a summons on Thursday night to marry a couple there. They have a temporary minister there, one of the cleverest men among us, a Mr ——. But he has more than his average share of eccentricity. He has made a marriage service of his own and will use no other. The bride objected to the kissing which he introduces into the public ceremony—‘With this *kiss* I thee wed.’ ‘All right,’ said he, ‘then let her get someone else to do it.’ One lady he married had refused, and he had told her he should not go on with the service till she did it! Hence they applied to me. Oh, we are a queer lot! Even I am a quite exceptional

man. There's nobody the like of me in Leeds. But these men beat me altogether.

"This —— would go to the stake for the merest trifle. And he is a splendid man, considering that he has had no education to speak of."

"February, 1, 1902.

"I have just finished *Erewhon Revisited* and was much impressed with it. I hope the many will not discover how serious it is, or it will be damned out of circulation as blasphemous."

"April 22, 1902.

"I sent a sermon on Nova Persei to the printer's on Wednesday, and felt that that was off my mind. But my peace was of short duration. In bed my conscience suddenly began, 'You think you have got off easily, do you? You have got your May sermon in hand, and for the first Sunday you will preach an old sermon about Maytime. Eh? And what about Oliver Heywood, pray, the most distinguished of Yorkshire ejected ministers, who died the 4th of May two hundred years ago? You are not going to take the trouble to read up his life and times, and if you do preach about him you won't print the sermon, as you ought to do, and you know it.' There was no peace for me till I told my conscience I would telephone before breakfast the next morning and tell them to wait orders before setting up the type. Good. The next day I tried in vain to shuffle out of it, so found myself saddled with an extra sermon on a subject which required a lot of reading up, to be crowded in with a lengthy morning wedding and an evening dinner, and the two ordinary sermons to be ready for Sunday.

"Saturday, 26th.—They are done! Really yesterday morning I came near to giving it up. I couldn't write, so at least I felt, and thought of Anthony Trollope who tells us he wrote even when sea-sick. The question is, What will it be worth? I sent it straight to the printers, fearing my own judgment on it if I reread it. But I have often found what cost the most labour to be the best; sometimes my experience has been quite the contrary."

“May 17, 1902.

“I quite sympathise with his [your uncle Joseph’s] difficulty. It is not that he objects to having us. But he dreads it becoming known that he has a brother who is a Unitarian minister. And situated as he is, it would be impossible to keep it back if we were two nights at his house. It is not really bigotry, but regard for his parishioners, who would be scandalised at their pastor having an infidel for a brother and entertaining him at the vicarage. It is really much the same to these people whether the difference from them be on matters of opinion or of morals. If I was an advocate of polygamy and kept half-a-dozen wives—which God forbid!—it is obvious that a respectable clergyman could not receive me into his house; but ‘to deny the Lord who bought me’ is in their opinion an error as wicked and even more fatal. So don’t be contemptuous towards [such people]. After all, the majority of the good and wise men of the world have been narrow, and how could they be otherwise on the hypothesis which they accepted without question—that God had made to men a revelation of His will and the way of Salvation? Can it be a matter of indifference whether you believe God and take His way, or disbelieve and disobey Him? So enters the fatal error, cause of endless misery even to this day, so general and so absurd—the error that my opinion is God’s truth, and hence that to differ from me in religion is sinful and blasphemous.

“Thank Heaven that you have been so differently brought up, but don’t look down on others.”

*To his Daughters*

“March 7, 1908.

“O my stupid little girl. Why will you so misunderstand yourself? You are like a pendulum swinging backwards and forwards between the pride of a duchess and the self-depreciation which would become a dunce. Your letters are charming, yet at their best conclude with some stupid remark about being so stupid. I am so happy to think of

both of you being happy as you are. O my darling children, I should be well content to die if I were assured that you all would be happy, and you especially, my sweet child.

"Why have I always loved you so much? I suppose because I could never help it. The thought of you is constantly occurring to me in the day time, and you come to me in dreams at night. I was once so beset by the thought of you that I tried, and tried hard, to drive it away and failed completely.

"Oh, if I could see you really happy and well clothed with flesh how delighted I should be! I am not sorry you will have experience of humble quarters before returning home. You naturally adapt yourself so readily to a luxurious life, and it is not easy to come down at once to our lowly ways."

*"November 1, 1909.*

"A happy New Month to you, my darling girl, and to Margaret and to everyone. . . .

"We have had beautiful weather at Grange all the past week, and I have had some of those rare and blessed hours of communion with nature when one loses self and is merged in the great All, whose is the life of all things, and in whom the myriad lives of things are One.

"On Sunday, mother and I went a walk in the morning over fells and through the woods, and in the evening to Cartmel Church, where we sang those glorious psalms which breathe a spirit so different from that of common Christianity."

*"March 21, 1912.*

"The worst part of E.'s letter this morning is that you are in low spirits. You should leave such follies to old people. You have life before you. But I know you can't help it. If your temperature is below normal, you are sure to be down at heart, and it must be very trying to fall ill just as your examination is coming on. There's nothing to do, darling, and nothing to advise, except the very stale way to meet all trouble—just to bear it. Bear it like the donkey does who is exposed to the blizzard on the moor,

and turns his back so as to receive it on his hind quarters instead of on his face.

“Strike cases are coming in fast, so I shall be very busy. Yesterday I had three meetings, and also the day before, but you are more trouble to me than all the rest, though I suppose it should not be so. I ought to be willing to sacrifice you for the public good. . . . What should we do if you were alone with no one to love you! E. is not a good nurse . . . but she loves, and that counts for an infinite deal. ‘*Aquæ multæ*’<sup>1</sup>—do you remember my favourite text?”

“1913.

“Ethelberga Mary—I like your name best of the three. I owe to you two books which have much impressed me—two lives of common women. The first that of Mrs Ramsay MacDonald’s translation—the story of a noble struggle against what seem insurmountable obstacles, a struggle in which millions of women are engaged to-day. The second that of a victim of Victorian prejudices, the mean, miserable, useless life of a woman who had education and money. Now I want you to read this latter again carefully, and write me a paper on it. Why did she fail so utterly? It will be good for you to think and write about it.

“My poor little boiled girl, I can’t enjoy the sun properly for thinking how oppressed you are with its warmth. And I am so frightened of your getting ill.

“I was glad to visit Winchester and be the guest of the Head Master of the oldest school in England. But I was very shy. The house was so clerical.”

“October 19, 1913.

“I read Edmond Holmes’ book yesterday with great interest and much sympathy. I was taking exception to some of his statements, but was disarmed by his own confession: ‘This chapter contains many sweeping statements which need to be liberally discounted. They are statements of tendency only, and do not pretend to be literally true.’

<sup>1</sup> “Many waters have gone over me.”

I never read such a candid admission before. But the broad fact remains, and I have been painfully conscious of it for many years, that education, as it is and always has been, is a tragedy. And how can it ever be otherwise? It is the most difficult job in the world, and everybody has to undertake it. Every parent, teacher, elder brother or sister, trained or untrained, themselves ill-taught, impatient, dogmatic, stupid, ignorant, unsympathetic—all must try for good and ill. And what hope is there of better things? A few may no doubt come under happier influences, a few thousands even, but what will they count? Still we must do what we can, try all kinds of experiments in education, and learn as much by failure as by success. I do hope you will succeed in getting an insight into this Montessori system. It sounds so rational and promising. I have no doubt in a little while the candidates for training will be numerous, and you do well to be among the first."

*To his three Daughters*

"August 7, 1915.

"Dear all of you. . . . How many things in this intensely interesting world, I shall die and have missed the opportunity of becoming acquainted with! Now that the night hours are drawing swiftly on, and all opportunity is about to cease the thought is ever with me. 'I have lived seventy years and never seen the ocean,' said John Paul Richter, as I read somewhere in Carlyle ages ago, 'seventy and never seen the ocean'—ocean not easily accessible to a Southern German of the days before railways, and he added, 'The ocean of eternity I shall not fail to see'—only what that just means nor I nor he knows. What we do know is that this visible universe, with its infinite of wonder and delight, will cease with the senses, just as the outside world of multifarious colour and life comes to an end for us when night falls and moon and stars are none. We town-dwellers miss many things, and one is real darkness. You should try and realise it in the country. I remember once on Wimbledon Common going late at night with

your grandfather from 'the Keir'<sup>1</sup> and losing him utterly when, as I presently found, he was within arm's reach of me. Well, such darkness is before all of us soon or late—no earth, no sun, no stars, no fellow-creatures, nothing at all we have been wont to see and feel all our lives! No body of our own even! What such a state is we can't conceive, though we can talk about it and be absolutely certain.

"Well, my day of sleeping and waking, seeing and doing, and learning and thinking, has been a long one and a very full one. I have seen so much, but not Jerusalem or a storm at sea, or 'a meet'<sup>2</sup> And this last you will have seen, and none of you yet forty! But I have seen Stonehenge, and that is a great satisfaction, though why it should be so it would not be easy to tell.

"And I have heard Horatio Bottomley! and that last night. The Kursaal was crowded, and he deserved it. We were in a bad position at the side, but he is a splendid elocutionist, and we hardly missed a word. The speech was very quiet and sensible. I only hope he was right in his concluding remarks—that he had just come from the Front and could assure us that the long-awaited-for advance, though it might yet be delayed some few weeks, would take place and would be an immense success—'So they were assured, all of them, and with good reason.' Moreover, that Kitchener himself was going to take command. Be it so! We do sorely need a little encouragement, for really we have had none in a large way yet, and Germany holds its own in our Allies' territory still, and on the East has won what, if it were ours, we should call a great victory. Oh! if I could believe Bottomley or Churchill, or any one of all who, optimists and pessimists alike, assure us that we are certain to win in the long run! I devoutly hope so, but I cannot call myself a believer. An unsatisfactory peace, the brood-mother of future wars, seems to me more likely."

<sup>1</sup> His old school at Wimbledon.

<sup>2</sup> They had told him they were going to "a meet" on Exmoor.

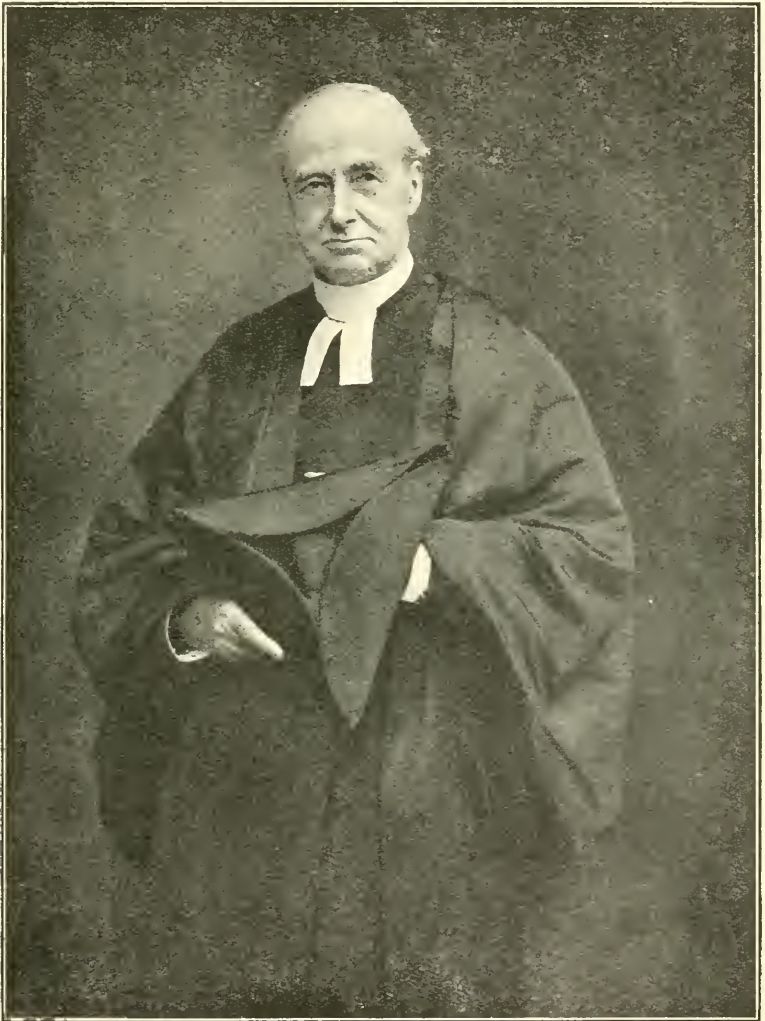
## CHAPTER XVI

### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

HARGROVE was of the middle height ; the figure slightly built but of good proportions ; the attitude alert ; the gait well balanced and steady. His movements were rapid, begun without false starts and ended cleanly at the point of arrival, as of a man in whom thought translated itself into action without unnecessary deliberation or unavailing regrets. His whole presence gave you the impression that his body had been designed for the soul that animated it, and not stolen nor borrowed, nor tumbled out by accident, as some men's bodies seem to be. No muddy vesture of decay, but a shining garment. In the physical make-up there was nothing *unmanageable*, such as a nose that was too long for the face, a jaw that hung down, an eye that wandered, or a hand that had always to be kept in the pocket. At every point the form was clearly defined, like a well-written *λόγος* or Word, or a message delivered without hesitation ; it reminded you of his handwriting, which was firm but current, compact but well-spaced, without erasures, and rounded off with a bold and legible signature.

The head was large and well-formed, the eyes far apart, and the ears set far back. It was a *face* you saw, and not a mere collection of features tossed together by Nature in a fit of absence of mind ; a face *chiselled* by a careful artist, and not *moulded* by a journeyman after a standardised





*From a photograph by James Bacon & Son, Leeds*

HARGROVE IN 1911



pattern. The nose, which was finely cut and highly finished, stood upon its rights as the master feature, summing up the formula on which the whole face was fashioned. The mouth was long and mobile ; the lips thin and firmly closed, with a slight protrusion of the lower, indicating capacity for scorn ; clearly a *man's* mouth, made for speech and for keeping silence, and not a mere trap or aperture for the reception of food, like the mouth of a fish. Between the two eyes I used to note a difference—though not, I think, a discord,—the left being as it were elevated and telescopic, while the other was on the open sight, as though reserved for the nearer examination of what the first had discovered afar off. Both were furnished with the fine apparatus of inward and outward muscles which humour requires for its manifestations, and though these were usually at rest, you saw they were there ready to break into activity at any moment and irradiate the whole face with smiles. The skin was clear and showed faintly the red colour of the blood beneath.

Though he lived to the advanced age of seventy-eight, his health was never of the best ; I observe that the Insurance Companies refused to place him in the highest class of "lives." He did his work to a constant accompaniment of minor sufferings and *désagrémens*. He was no more "wiry" than robust. "Finely-balanced" describes him well ; surprisingly energetic when the balance was perfect, but easily upset ; ill fitted therefore to stand the strain of constant overwork. Like the soul that informed it, his body was not made for rough usage. The nervous system was highly sensitive and easily irritated by moral as well as by physical causes. But he carried the ills of the flesh with a stout heart and a brave countenance, fearless about them as about everything else ; and he would be vivid and smiling even when in pain. He was youthful to the last.

Hargrove was a man of many friendships, often indeed complaining bitterly of his "religious" isolation, as many Unitarian preachers have cause to do, but never wanting for social intercourse and that of varied kinds—by no means therefore a lonely man. He was a voracious and discursive reader of books, taking his food not in one pasture only but browsing freely wherever the grass was green. He loved men even more than books and good conversation more than reading. As a host or a guest he was ever a late sitter-up by the fireside, genial, brilliant, many-sided, and humorous. At the sight of a friend he would *spring forward* to greet him with a joyous alacrity, not waiting to be approached, but covering the intervening space almost before the other was aware of his presence—a man likely to take the *first move* in forming a friendship or effecting a reconciliation; not "accessible" merely, but an active suitor for human love. His attention to the minor courtesies of life was perfect, and beyond what the letter of the law required; from which point one could trace one's way backward to the major virtues in which good manners have their root. He would go far out of his way to do a gracious act; nay, he would "waste" precious time on such things, as the woman "wasted" the precious spikenard which she poured on the head of Christ. He was absolutely free from the motive of jealousy, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than to see the success of his friends. He would help them to attain it, and encourage them to try again when they failed. I have reason to say so. Whenever I had published a little thing in the magazines, a story or such-like nonsense, not to speak of more serious efforts, which happened to please him, he never failed to write me a generous letter; nor, when the effect was contrary, to point out where I had gone astray and show me how to do better next time—

excellent critic that he was. And this to me, whose raw inexperience must often have provoked him in the earlier stages of our intercourse ; for I was not one of the older and more established group of his friends, but had come among them suddenly, when the harvest was already ripening, like one born out of due time.

And yet along with this natural humanity, in him so evident, there was ever about him an indécible something which caused the beholder to say, "This man either is, has been, or will be a priest." I think it was written most clearly in his countenance, which bore to the last the traces of past asceticisms, of vigils, fastings, wrestlings, and prayers. Moreover, he spoke and bore himself with a certain authority ; you would never suspect that the man before you was one who "held his religious beliefs tentatively." I have seldom met a man whose past life had so inscribed—I had almost said *sculptured*—itself in face, form, and figure ; nay, there was an echo of it in the very tones of his voice. By gazing at him long and steadily, as I have often done (for his face was not easily read), you could, in a measure, reconstruct his history ; you might actually *see* him, with the mind's eye, in the various scenes and attitudes of the past—wearing his tonsure and monkish garb, embracing the walls of his cell in a rapture of devotion, standing by the altar "*avec un recueillement si grand*," hearing confessions, saying masses, lifting up his hand in benediction, proclaiming from the pulpit the divine graces and incomparable perfections of the Immaculate Mother of God. Of all this the traces were plainly visible, and of much else ; especially of the suffering which had attended him through life, and which, beginning in the terrible conflict with his father, and passing from one form to another, had left upon him many scars. And then, waking from your dream, you would realise with a start that this man was now a

“Unitarian minister,” a denier of many doctrines that he had once held sacred. And yet in essence and substance the same—a priest self-consecrated to the service of God. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*

His manner in the pulpit was fervid, trenchant, and emphatic; the delivery sustained on a fairly even level of vehemence, with no dithyrambic *abandon* that I ever noted, but still with a good deal of fire. I have heard it said by some that his preaching was emotional, and from others I have heard the opposite. My own opinion inclines to the former party; but I must add that he did not seem to me to be so much inspired by a wide range of feeling, changing from note to note, as by a unitary and general emotion grounded on the nature of his whole message: in which case there would be truth in both statements. He constructed his sermons on an orderly plan and was very skilful in the presentation of an argument, in which respect his training for the *Ordo Predicatorum* served him well; nor had he studied the English language and the English poets for nothing. His voice was clear and vibrant, but it lacked resonance and was weak on the lower register; it cut rather than swept its way to the hearer, and I have sometimes thought that I could detect in it a faint note of wailing petulance, as of one who had endured much contradiction from the world.

Along with his gifts as thinker and scholar, which were marked and even eminent, there was in him something of the artist as well, too little to make him a creator, but enough to make him a lover of the beautiful and to give the touch of beauty to his own work. I have often thought that he might have done much in that line had fate been kinder to him. By the alchemy of his will he had, as we have seen, turned many of his early misfortunes into advantages and made them work for good; but in some

respects they had done him irreparable harm. Had he been spared the cramping discipline, first under his father's theology, and then in the Catholic Church, which forced him as long as it lasted to sacrifice imagination in the interests of self-study, I cannot but believe that he would have made a notable contribution to one or other of the imaginative arts. Even as it was, he would throw his arms round the trunk of a tree, and shout for joy in the flowing wind, and bubble over with glee when the sun broke out from behind a cloud—sure signs that the heart of the man, after all its buffetings, was still true to the great Elements, in loyalty to which lies the secret of creative work.

Among the personal characteristics of a man his philosophy should always be reckoned as one. It explains his temperament, indicates the general line of his preferences, and sums up his history, thus enabling us to see his *ferm* from one angle of vision. Philosophy is reflection—and what it reflects is, primarily, the man. There is a saying, "once a priest, always a priest," which, in Hargrove's case, is true at least to this extent that, although he discarded the whole body of distinctively Roman doctrine, he never lost his hold on the principles of that philosophy which had formed the basis of his priestly training. This was the philosophy contained in the *Summa Theologia* of St Thomas Aquinas, the only type of pure metaphysic which leaves a theistic position possible to a resolutely analytical mind. To that book, or rather to that great library of thought, Hargrove owed the habits of his intellect, the form of his reasoning, the major conceptions of his theology. He left it, of course, at the point where it turned to its applications, as in the theory of the Incarnation ; but the *method* was retained—consciously when he was challenged by a particular question, unconsciously through the general body of his thought. The doctrine of God which he presented

to the Boston Unitarians, and on which he finally rested as the intellectual basis of theism, is the doctrine of the *Summa*, or rather the doctrine of Aristotle as reinterpreted by the philosophy of the Schoolmen—the doctrine of the First Mover, who is unmoved. Philosophically, therefore, I should reckon him among the Schoolmen. I am not aware that Hargrove took much pains to master the religious philosophy of more recent schools. He certainly studied Martineau, but more as an admirer of his religious genius than a follower of his metaphysic. In these matters he had the feeling that he was equipped already, such reading or study as he undertook leading him to conclude, as he told me more than once, that religious philosophy had made no real advance beyond the point at which Aquinas left it, and that many of its best modern arguments were but repetitions in less convincing form of what had been more forcibly presented in the Middle Age.

In matters of doctrine peculiar to the Christian Church his position was at the left wing of the critical school. In one of the earlier sermons he spoke of the “world’s obligations to Jesus of Nazareth”—a phrase leaving room for a large variety of interpretations, but obviously cautious and non-committal. Beyond the general acknowledgment that the world was “under obligations” to Jesus of Nazareth the Christological part of him did not advance. No doubt the “obligations” in question were immense, but they were not unique. In a little pamphlet entitled *What do Unitarians Believe?* written in 1900, he has nothing to say about Jesus beyond the statement that “He was one by whom God sent ‘good tidings of peace,’ teaching us to love and trust Him as our Father in heaven, to forgive as we would be forgiven, and to do to others as we would that they should do to us.” There is evidence that to the end of life his mind remained quite unmovable at this point, neither advancing nor re-



treating. From time to time I would call his attention to some book or writing in which the latest explorer of these waters reported that he had found new *land* in Christological latitudes ; at which he would sorrowfully shake his head and say, "It is a *cloud*." "Modernism" as a mode of reconciling old faiths with new did not appeal to him. I remember a meeting or discussion at which certain reformers of the Unitarian persuasion were proposing to turn their backs on the spiritual fathers who begat them, and set up a form of Christ-worship on novel or modernist principles ; whereupon he roundly gave them a piece of his mind, and, speaking as one who, in his time, had been led astray by many a mirage, declared with some heat that he would not retrace his steps along a path where he had found so much sorrow in the past. It took place a year or two before his death. This question of Christology is a matter on which there has been much change or fluctuation of Unitarian opinion in recent years, some going forward to an extreme speculative theism, some backward to one or other of the "historical" positions. But the fluctuations did not extend to him. We have here a confirmation of what I have tried to make clear in a previous chapter, that the opinions Hargrove reached in 1876 indicate the goal beyond which he never passed. "I have learnt much," he said in a farewell sermon to his Leeds congregation ; "I have not changed much."

As bearing upon this point the following note seems to me of value :—"Dr Hargrove once told me," writes Mr J. R. Mozley, "of an expression used by my uncle, Francis W. Newman (perhaps in a conversation with him, but it may have been in more general company, I cannot say), which had an abiding influence on his mind, though not, I believe, producing any immediate effect on his conduct : it is obvious, however, that it would tend towards loosening

his attachment whether to the Church of England or to the Church of Rome. To the best of my recollection it was this: 'I can never believe that a man was Almighty God.'"

His personality and his vocation were closely united—united, one might say, in an indissoluble wedlock. He was the minister through and through; there was no part of his nature held in reserve for a life apart. A man who might have succeeded in many walks of life, he was content with that in which he found himself. He had many disappointments, of course, but he showed no sign of being a disappointed man. Preaching did not dull his spiritual sense; there was no approach to that state of exhaustion once confessed to me by a wearied preacher—"I should have been a religious man if I had not been *compelled* to preach so many sermons." On him, indeed, preaching had the opposite effect. It compelled him to give *form* to a faith which otherwise, in virtue of the sceptical tendency always active within him, would have become a formless mood or vague desire, dividing him against himself. Perhaps, none the less, he preached too much. Copious as his resources were, I cannot but think that for one who "held his views tentatively" and conceived that the function of the minister was "to *learn* the divine" (rather than to dogmatise about it), he was too much in the pulpit and its attendant committee-rooms, and too little in the open air. Under the constant strain of producing two or more sermons a week there is an inevitable loss of the sense of proportion, which shows itself in a tendency to treat the universe as a mere mine for the preacher or a field for the exercise of his business; and most assuredly the universe is far more than that. The richest natures are precisely those which suffer most under this excessive drain on the inner man, and though Hargrove escaped its worst results, he was

not entirely untouched. A similar vocational bias may be observed even in great philosophers.

Happily there was a force at work in Hargrove's life which rendered him secure from the blighting influence of professionalism. "His children were his teachers." He had four of them: three daughters and a son. The story of his life would not be told entirely amiss if I were to say that his pilgrimage reached its goal in the possession of children of his own; for though his children were not the objects of his religion it is certain that, without them, his nature would have been too maimed and starved for the higher exercise of the spiritual life. If one can say of anything in this world that it was indispensable to a man such as he, that without it he could never have come to himself, we have it here. All that immense capacity for love which had been bruised and crushed in the struggle with his father, and balked in his relations with his brother, here found a natural outlet and a pure satisfaction.

But this part of the story had best be told in other words than mine; so I will cite a good witness. The following, written by Miss Aphra Locke Hargrove, reveals the nerve of his family life. Incidentally it tells us of other things, not out of harmony, I think, with what I have told already.

*"My Father*

"He had a 'passion for fatherhood'—a passion so deep that at times it almost hurt to realise its intensity.

"My earliest memories of him are of an ever-fascinating companion who made walks and meals delightful by his flow of 'nonsense-talk'—whose face lit up whenever he met me and whenever I laid my hand upon his—who in times of trouble was as a tower of strength and a haven of refuge.

"As I grew up he became the recipient of my

youthful confidences: each fresh enthusiasm he shared with me; each new thought I propounded to him; in each manifestation of mental growth I knew him to be rejoicing. He never dismissed my raw opinions as of no account nor damped my callow literary ardours as the immature judgments of youth. But at every stage of my development he was at my side—entering into each as it came with as much zest as I showed myself.

“Of ‘religious teaching,’ as it is ordinarily understood, we had none. The doctrine of ‘social service’ we imbibed from our earliest years—he never let us forget the supreme importance of it. But he made no attempt to give us systematic instruction in Bible History, and we grew up untroubled by the claims and perplexities of ‘religion.’ ‘What you believe or don’t believe doesn’t matter in the least; what you *do*, whether you are of service in the world, is the only thing that counts’—that was my creed in my adolescent years, and he did not seek to change or improve upon it.

“Indeed, one of his deepest convictions was the necessity of allowing to the younger generation perfect freedom. I have often heard him deplore the folly of parents who expect their children to be moulded after their own pattern, and who are aggrieved when they develop on lines other than those laid down for them. He might regret that we had decided upon a certain course of action, but once he had satisfied himself that we were resolute he ceased to dissuade us and stood aside to let us work out our own salvation in our own way. Never do I remember being ‘forbidden’ to do anything. His parental veto was a weapon he always refused to use.

“But in spite of the indirect way in which his influence was exercised, it was a very real and vital thing in our lives. Although he at all times found it difficult to ‘suffer fools gladly’ and it took very little to ‘bore’ him, he was yet one of the most charitable

of men. He rarely passed judgment upon anybody, and it distressed him to hear anyone else doing so, while jealousy was a weakness so foreign to his nature that he was hardly able to understand it. He disliked the habit of grumbling—that symptom of a mind lacking philosophy—more perhaps than any other, and always urged us to compare our lots—if compare them we must—with those of people worse off and not better off than ourselves. Of sins, that of cruelty to children was to him, I think, alone unforgiveable, and stories of it pained him almost beyond endurance. For his love of little children was a very deep one, and his tenderness towards them was almost maternal in its character.

“He was an ardent Nature lover, and only those who have been with him in scenes of beauty—especially in the beauty of mountains and moors and high windy places—know just how much these things meant to him. I have often seen him take off his hat and shout ‘Hallelujah’ out of pure exaltation of spirit—at the song of a lark, the sound of the wind in the trees, the swaying of the corn in the breeze, the sweep of some heather-clad moor; and I have seen him look up at a bird singing its heart out among the branches and, greeting it with one of his radiant smiles, say to it in his tender whimsical way, ‘God bless you, birdie!’ and been told by him to put my arms round the slender silvery trunk of a young birch tree and kiss it in a salutation of love.

“His delight in architecture was another characteristic that manifested itself during country rambles. He would seldom pass a village church without entering it, and was quick to detect and to revel in any architectural beauties it might possess. Indeed, I think his love of architecture was only second to that of books.

“Music, too, made a strong appeal to him—especially orchestral music, which was capable of exciting and stirring him to the very depths of his being. But

he had no 'ear' and was unable even to sing 'God save the King' in tune!

"His range of interests was amazingly wide, and I think that almost the only department of human activity to which he was completely indifferent was sport. This diversity of interests he used to consider a weakness—in that it had always prevented him from devoting to any one study that intensity of concentration which might have resulted in his becoming an expert in it. This is doubtless true, but nevertheless it was a weakness that endeared him to many who—had he been a learned and weighty authority, grown old amongst his books—would have had nothing in common with him.

"He was always, I think, a sceptic at heart, and a 'personal God' had no place in his philosophy. But in God as the Infinite Spirit pervading all things, as the Presence whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, he had a belief that nothing could shake. For he felt it, behind the phenomena of mountain and moor and forest, and his face would light up with solemn ecstasy as he contemplated the beauty of the world. He felt, too—as he has often told me during the many long walks and talks we have had together,—conscious of the unity of all created things. He could not explain it—the feeling was too elusive for explanation,—but he was convinced that we are all somehow parts of one great whole, intimately bound up with one another and with Nature. The sense of 'kinship,' he used to say, is the basis of all morality and the impelling spirit prompting every form of social service. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy heart and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself'—these words he considered constitute the Alpha and Omega of religion and contain the 'one thing needful.'

"The pain and sin and sorrow of the world he did not pretend to be able to explain; 'Take things as

they come' was his philosophy, 'endure suffering bravely, inexplicable and unjust as it may seem. *C'est la vie.*' He refused to look upon death—especially death in old age—as a calamity, and alluded frequently to the time when he would no longer be with us, never allowing us to shut our eyes to the fact of its inevitable approach. And yet he was unconvinced as to the existence of a future life. He found difficulty in conceiving of the sudden extinction of personality, but the conception of its eternal survival he found equally difficult; so he left his judgment suspended and was content to wait.

"This lack of conviction distressed him in so far as it made it impossible for him to offer to the wounded and bereaved souls who sought comfort from him those assurances for which they craved. But his love of truth prevented him from giving them narcotics in which he himself had no faith, theories which—soothing as they might be—his keen analytical mind could not accept without the further proof which was not forthcoming.

"This scepticism, however, never became cynicism; he did not rebel against life and—although sadness was never far from him,—there was not a trace of bitterness in his heart. His passion for service prevented him from being oppressed by a sense of futility—that and his faith in the reality of the abiding Presence behind all phenomena.

"But the note on which I want to end is that on which I began—his capacity for love. To love was a necessity of his nature. During his solitary childhood and the tense stormy years of his early life all full expression of it had been denied to him, and when at last the pent-up flood found an outlet it poured forth upon those dear to him in a great torrent, expending itself ceaselessly upon them. And for that deep love of so rare a spirit, may we be worthy to our life's end."

## CHAPTER XVII

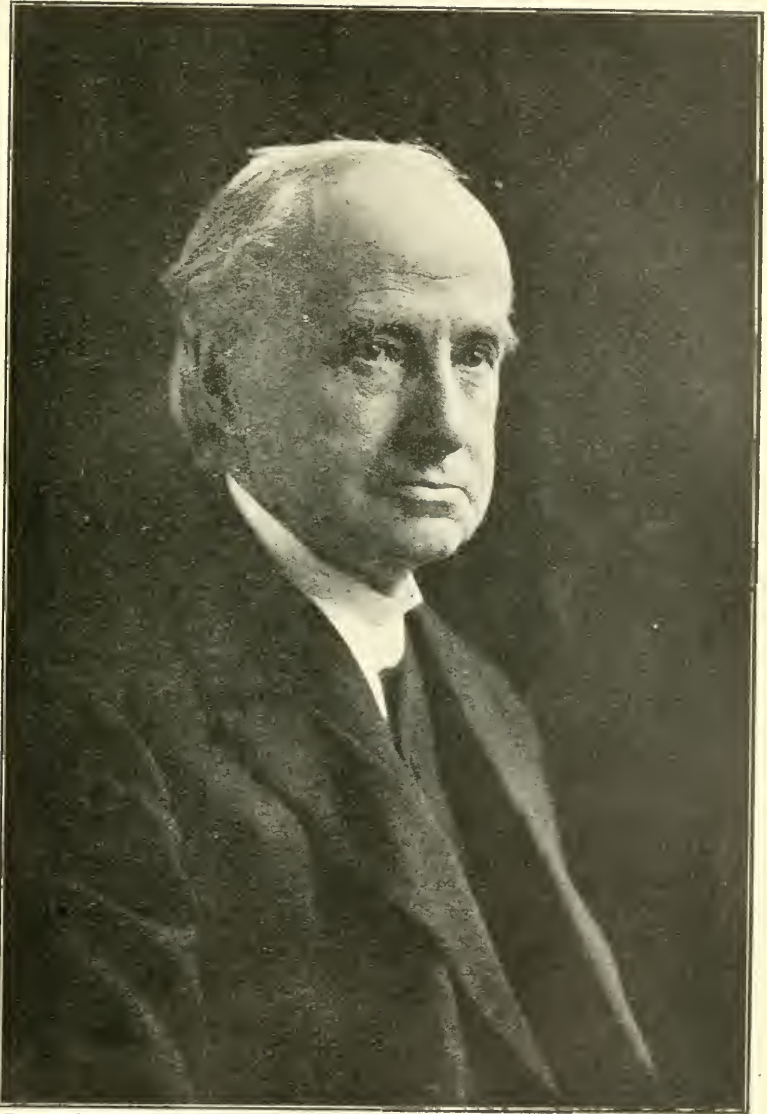
### CLOSING YEARS AND DEATH

AFTER Hargrove's retirement from the Leeds ministry he took up his residence with his family in London. He had earned repose and was glad of it ; but he was by no means inactive. He constantly preached up and down the country, and took a leading part in the counsels of the group of churches known as "Unitarian." He was made President of their Triennial Conference in 1915, an office which he held up to the time of his death. In the same year the University of Leeds conferred on him the Degree of Litt.D. He kept up a large correspondence with his friends, and wrote the autobiography which I have presented at the beginning of this book.

At this time I saw more of him than when he was in Leeds. I had always found him a radiant person ; but now, I think, he was more joyous than ever—joyous to the point of light-heartedness and oft-repeated bursts of merriment. All the bitterness which had entered into his past life, but never overpowered it, was clean swept away—only sweet waters came forth from him. He abounded in reminiscences, and loved to talk, most of all, about the happy days in Leeds. He spoke evil of no man, and though he would sometimes recur to his far-off troubles he did so without a word of blame, unless it were one directed against himself. Often he would speak of the Church of Rome, but always in terms of love and veneration. The thought of on-



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*From a photograph by Elliot & Fry*

HARGROVE IN 1916



coming death and of what he might be called to answer for troubled him not a whit. He had made his account with all that long ago, and he was ready for the summons, knowing that it could not be long delayed. And more than ready, I think. He seemed wistfully eager as to what the future had in store for him ; and there was that about him, in the growing radiance of his manner, that suggested that he was about to embark on another, and more prosperous, pilgrimage. He was full of love, to his children most of all, to his friends both living and dead, to his father and mother, long departed but now coming nearer to him, and to all mankind.

Alas ! he was not to live to see the end of the Great War, which he regarded as holy on our side, ever maintaining with fervid conviction that we must fight on till the evil thing had been utterly and finally overthrown.

He died, after a brief and sudden illness, at Ventnor, whither he had gone for a holiday, on June 19, 1918, the anniversary of the death of his brother four years earlier. He was cremated, and the ashes were deposited in a vault before the altar-table of the Mill Hill Chapel in Leeds. Dr J. Estlin Carpenter conducted the funeral service, and his old friend Philip Wicksteed gave an address. "Hail, brother, and farewell !" he cried, quoting the words of Catullus ; "thank God for you !"

"I met Dr Hargrove," writes the Rev. R. Thurber, Vicar of Kensal Green, "when he was advanced in years and in somewhat weak health, but was drawn to him at once, both by the keenness of his thought and the glow of youthful ardour which permeated his whole being. I had no knowledge of the circumstances of his career, but I felt intuitively that he had passed through many deeply-felt experiences, and that they had left him wise and ripe in judgment, and with a large and kindly outlook on men and

things. And, behind and beyond this, one became conscious of that which is so rare, an absolute sincerity of thought and an eager regard for Truth in its largest and fullest sense, and especially where religion was concerned. There was, indeed, about Dr Hargrove an unworldliness in his thinking as well as in his general attitude to earthly things which men generally rate so highly. And he loved what was deep in life and in human beings. That was, I think, why he revelled so in Browning. To him all the strange and complicated phases of character which life reveals were absorbingly interesting, as throwing light on that hidden reality of One Being here for which he was, both with reverence and eagerness, ever seeking. Perhaps the very essence of him was a fine balance between mind and heart. He longed to believe, and he longed to know; and, while welcoming all gleams of light from any source, his conscientiousness in sifting things to the bottom was inexorable. He loved many things, but the Truth most; and in his allegiance to that high ideal he never wavered. That was the impression one received in a short but happy acquaintance with him."

I know of no last impression I would rather leave with the reader than that which he will receive from the following letters. They were written to his beloved youngest child, his daughter Aphra—the last, six days before his death. Into these things he put his heart. And the heart of the man is the *man*, as God knows him.

" HARROGATE,  
" September 19, 1913.

"There was much of your last letter, my darling child, which I might have taken for a passage from some old letter of my own if it had been read aloud to me without my seeing it or being told who it was from.

“ My first week is over. Now I can begin the term in earnest, resolutely keeping my gaze forward, not backward bent. That is easier to do when you no longer feel ‘ this time last week I was doing so-and-so ’ —it might have been a passage from some letter of mine to mother when I had left her (she being then my heart’s beloved, not my wife yet) to go back to my lecture work at Nottingham and Sheffield. My first lecture was my worst, because my thoughts were all of ‘ this time last week. ’ And oh ! at school how bitter the remembrance, but that experience has been spared you. And then ‘ The only thing that at all weighs upon me is the prospect of that Report I have got to write. I must tackle it this week somehow, and I foresee much anguish and tribulation awaiting me. ’ Even now, after so many years’ experience and of moderate success and no absolute failure, the prospect of composition weighs upon me, and I regret to have undertaken it. My engagements, lightly made months in advance, loom upon my view as I draw near to the dates of their fulfilment as menacing giants. I feel myself a David going out to encounter them, but with none of David’s confidence that his God will help him. Lastly, ‘ I wish mightily I had more self-confidence. You’ve no idea what a low idea I have of my own abilities. Of course it may at the same time be a true one—which makes things worse still. I wonder what’s the cause of this feeling of self-depreciation ? Is it the result of having too high ideals ? ’ I can’t answer these questions. I know that the conceit of themselves which many clever young people possess is offensive to their elders as well as to their coevals, but I often think that if it has a good foundation in real ability and character it is a great advantage to them. When I was your age I valued myself too highly. Now since I have resigned Mill Hill I often incline to the belief that I have undervalued my position and influence and capacities

as minister. I don't know. It's so easy to think too much or too little of oneself alternately or even simultaneously. They are wise words of St Paul on which I have preached more than once or twice: 'I say to every one of you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly according as God has dealt to him his measure.' And sobriety of self-judgment is a rare gift. Myself I often incline to say that I have been a wretched failure, but I am not sure that the thought is not begotten of too high an estimate of myself. I am disappointed that I have not attained a far higher position, one that I believe myself to have been capable of, if only—there's the rub. *If*, in addition to certain powers of thought and speech, I had been possessed of the capacity for work. But then I never had it, and—well, finally, my own darling daughter, we must each of us accept his self for what nature and training have made him. We each have our measure, so much and no more. We *can* make good use of what we have.

“Bang. Birthday Eve! And on the entry of a New Year these lines will greet you. Oh, how strange, how incredible that my baby should be twenty-three! And she will be twenty-four, thirty, fifty, sixty, seventy, I hope; but no greeting will come in heard words from father, but he will live in your memory, darling, and if he lives outside of it he will love you and long after you. What I wish you—would wish you at least, if wishes availed anything—is that married or single you may be of service in the world. You will have your troubles and sorrows, for there is no way of escape from them, and it would not be well for you to go without them; but they will not interfere with the worth of your personality—be it great or moderate, may you make the most of it for your kind! Such is the longing of a loving father for his best loved child.

“CHICHESTER MANSION, BRIGHTON,  
“1917.

“MY DARLING GIRL.—The arrival of your telegram yesterday caused much excitement in the house, succeeded by general jubilation. As we could not secure lodgings at Lewes, we decided to come on here, where we were for our wedding-day, and we found the best bedroom in the house vacant and are very comfortable. We shall leave next Tuesday for Pinecroft. This is the ninety-second anniversary of the marriage of your grandfather and grandmother at Newcastle, Co. Limerick, but for which neither you nor I would have existed. Just think of all the unions of man and woman for ages of which you and I are the outcome! It is stormy here to-day, and I suppose it is the same with you, but happily you are not dependent for your happiness on sunshine, greatly as we both value it. What should we do without books? How did people get on without them for ages long? I suppose they lived much the lives of oxen and sheep when not actively engaged. My throat was none the worse for Sunday's work, but it is still uncomfortable.—Your devoted old father,  
C. H.”

“PINECROFT,  
“1917.

“‘Little girl,’ writes mother. No, you are really in no way a little girl—very precious you were then, but you are worth a great deal more now. The photograph rests in the note-case you gave me, along with my money, which is mere dross compared with it. I think it is very good, and I am so glad you got it taken, for we have none which represents you as you now are. Mother said on Monday that we had been neglecting you, and that we ought to write to you every day. Why! ‘Because you were so lonely.’ But I said she is enjoying herself immensely, and I can't induce myself to write out of a feeling of pity.

‘Well, but she is the youngest.’ I revolted. Primogeniture is a claim which has something to be said for it, but ‘Ultimogeniture—who ever heard the word?’ ‘Last and therefore least,’ I don’t admit, but ‘last and therefore most near and dear.’ Well, if parents are apt to feel so, they should be careful not to act upon their feelings.

“Upon all which doubts and questionings comes your delightful letter and overwhelms me with a sense of—no, it’s this morning’s post card which does it—of regret that you should have eagerly expected the postman and been disappointed: the post card and the two papers which came with it. I agree with you very much about the Church Service. The Psalms are always interesting to me whatever else is wearisome. ‘The pious aspirations and exalted fervour’ are there, sure enough, and with their savage imprecations and unintelligible phrases. ‘Moab is my wash pot’—not ‘flesh pot’ as you write, which would be much more respectable, but the common earthenware vessel in which I wash my feet. Curiously enough, I was preaching about Moab while you were in church. To the prophets she was what Germany is to us, but our wildest Jingoës never speak of Germany as the pious Israelites did of their rivals—except when they are at prayers!

“Is it really desirable that you should come all the way to Rye to join us? You must try for health’s sake to enjoy yourself thoroughly, and you must avoid dullness and boredom.—Your ever-loving old father,  
C. H.”

“VENTNOR,

“*Thursday, June 13, 1919.*”

“MY DEARLY BELOVED DAUGHTER,—All yesterday afternoon I felt as it were a cavity in my heart, due to your being taken away from me. But such uncomfortable feelings are not to be attended to, and



soon pass if we don't dwell on them. It's like having a tooth out, which can never be agreeable, and always leaves a sense of something wanting in the mouth, which the unintelligent tongue feels at again and again till it gets used to the blank. It will be much worse for you, because all your surroundings will be so new and strange, and, instead of doing as seems to you good, you will be under discipline from morning till night, just as our soldiers are. I am very glad you have had the courage to go in for this unwelcome experience. You will benefit by it spiritually, even if it should not answer any other purpose.

"This war will be the salvation of many a soul of girl and boy—indeed has been so already. It's glorious to think of the numbers who have turned away from a life of ease and frivolity, or of business which had no other aim than making money, to purposes as high and noble as the mind of man can conceive—the relief of suffering and the salvation of their country. They may not put it so to themselves, but it is the fact. They are fighting and nursing for the welfare of humanity.

"I think I feel your present discomfort of mind and body as much or perhaps more than you do yourself, but I do not flinch from it any more than you do. I am proud of your resolution and self-sacrifice.

"I shall think of you to-morrow and be with you, joy of my heart.

"And we shall go on enjoying ourselves here. It seems wrong, but it isn't. God bless you, my dearest child.

C. H."

# APPENDIX

## EXTRACTS FROM CHARACTERISTIC SERMONS

1876-1912

### I

#### UNSECTARIAN CHRISTIANITY (1876)

IT may be asked what do we mean by such a Christianity as this. "Unsectarian Christianity," writes an advanced Liberal, who probably would object to call himself a Christian, "can no more exist than there can be a triangle which has sides neither equal nor unequal, angles neither acute, right-angled, or obtuse." Willingly I accept the comparison and ask, Yet are not all three-sided figures, of all kinds and sizes, triangles, and may not all who acknowledge their obligation to Christ, of all creeds and opinions, be likewise Christians? But, he continues—and I quote his words because they express very forcibly arguments urged every day against this position, urged, too, from every side,—“Christianity as it is understood by Catholics and Protestants alike implies a body of beliefs of unspeakable importance to the world. Man is or is not placed here for a brief interval which is to decide his happiness or his misery throughout all eternity. His situation does or does not depend upon his allegiance to the Church or upon his undergoing a certain spiritual change. Christ came or did not come from God, and died or did not die to reconcile man to his Maker. An infidel is a man who accepts the negative of these propositions; a Christian is one who takes the affirmative; an unsectarian Christian, if he has any belief at all, is one who says that they may or may not be true and that it does not much matter.” So far Leslie Stephen; a writer of a very different stamp, quoted in a tract which was given to me in the train the other day, speaks in a similar tone. “Now,” he says, “it is thought grand and wise to condemn no opinion whatsoever, and to pronounce all earnest and clever teachers as trustworthy. Everything, forsooth, is true, and nothing is false!

Everybody is right, and nobody is wrong! Everybody is likely to be saved, and nobody is to be lost!" This last sentence has indeed no connection with the question, but it is worth quoting as showing the confusion of mind of the writer. The most bigoted, dogmatical of men may believe in the ultimate salvation of all, even while hating and persecuting views other than his own. But let us face this accusation which meets us thus from the most adverse camps. Do we assert doctrines to be at once true and false, or believe only that it is of no consequence which they are. Emphatically no! And if this be meant by unsectarian Christianity, let us shun a name which is but a euphemism for the wildest folly. Hell with its unspeakable torments is or is not devouring the children of men and gaping below for us; God did or did not become man and die in agonies to appease the wrath which burns there eternally. To be indifferent to such a fate, and to the only way of escape from it, is a degree of madness almost inconceivable. To profess such indifference is as frightful as it is contemptible, and if fine names are used to cloak it, let us shun them as robes which will both defile and burn. But Unitarians have no need to protest against an accusation which they have deserved less perhaps than any religious body in England. Whilst believers have held these hideous doctrines and been silent, as if they thought them not important enough to be much urged, at the risk of displeasing their hearers, ministers of our body have perseveringly and unceasingly attacked them, have not been content with the orthodox to let the matter drop, but have willingly been stigmatised as disturbers of Christian peace and wearisome agitators if only their protest might be heard. Indeed, if we had—what I trust we never may have—a creed to bind us together, I think after the first positive articles of belief in God and providence would follow the negative ones of a unanimous determined unbelief in hell and the divine Son made man to be a victim of the Father and save us from it. We recognise the cardinal doctrines which distinguish orthodox Christianity to be of infinite importance, and we affirm in the strongest manner that they are *not true*, that they *are false*. I will go further. I believe some of these doctrines to be horrible, immoral, blasphemous, inspiring men with false views of God and of life, tending to produce fruit only in misery and sin, or at best in a timid innocence, in an unloving worship.

I have known what it is to believe these things and in some measure realise their meaning, and I can never make light of doctrines such as the Incarnation, which but faintly appreciated

fills the soul almost with dread, so infinite are the impossibilities it assumes; or such as that of eternal punishment, easy to believe when under that name it is made the subject of articles in our magazines, or conversation by our firesides, but understood as everlasting torment, unending anguish, is the ghastliest horror ever conceived of human brain.

Indifferent to these things? It is an impossibility: when indifference exists, it is to their names, to the words, the sounds only, which have never borne any real meaning to thousands who hear and repeat them. And it is just this happy inconsistency between men's words and professions made in the honesty of simplicity, and their real beliefs never confessed even to themselves, and conduct modelled upon them, which renders unsectarian Christianity not only possible, but the real religion of multitudes who would strenuously disown the name. There are certain great truths respecting the duties of men to one another, and the relationship between men and God, which Christ certainly taught and which all who call themselves Christians believe. And it is these truths which are the real bond of union amongst us all, and the real inspiration of good words and works. Again, there are a number of differing doctrines by some assigned, by others denied, to Christ, which are the cause of the divisions among Christians, *i.e.* of sectarianism. Of these doctrines some are merely doubtful opinions, some regard insoluble mysteries which do not concern us, some are of infinite moment, but as a rule are believed in only after a fashion, or, to speak truth, not believed in at all. Does not our neighbour go to church and there solemnly declare as an act of worship that we who do not believe in the Trinity shall perish everlastingly, and thence come forth to our home and table, and treat us with all kindness and respect? Had an upright magistrate told one of us that he was deserving of six months' imprisonment, and would get it if he did not change his ways, I take it our church friend would look shy enough towards us, and most rightly. He professes to believe us worthy, in the sight of the Most Just Judge of Heaven, of prison and pain for ever; and the truth is, as he would perhaps admit, if pressed, that while the magistrate's remark inspires him with confidence, his own solemn protest is but so many words to be unheeded or explained away. Such being the case, I say that while there are doctrines which, regarded in the abstract as mere doctrines, place a gulf impassable between Christian and Christian, yet, regarded in the concrete, *i.e.* as held and professed by certain living men, even these need be no obstacle to

cordial sympathy, union, and good wishes not in worldly matters only, but in religious work and worship. Take, for example, the system of religion preached lately throughout England by Messrs Moody and Sankey. As a system it is at once hideous and grotesque, sentimental and unpractical; but am I therefore forbidden to doubt whether the effect on the whole of such preaching was not good, or to wish them God-speed in stirring up thoughtless souls to a sense of religion and of a higher life? And when I see a devoted priest labouring, unpraised and unrewarded of men, amongst the sinful and the poor, would you have me hinder his work, or would you hinder me forwarding him, because he mingles with help and advice strange doctrines, which not so mingled I should abhor?

## II

## ON CHANGING ONE'S BELIEFS (1897)

IN every religious body, after the first generation has passed away, there will be found two classes of members: the one consists of those who have inherited their faith—they have been taught it as children, have grown up in it, have never hesitated about it, or, if they have done so, have suppressed or solved their doubts; the others are the converts—those who have been brought up in another faith and have perhaps been at one time bigoted opponents of that which they have come to accept. The former have the advantage of a continuous life; in childhood, youth, manhood, or womanhood, they have professed the same or nearly the same beliefs; they have nothing to regret or recall in matter of religious profession, and if they have changed at all it has only been in the way of growth; they can claim the high praise of consistency, no one can reproach them with their own words, or weaken the confidence of their present assertion by recalling the equal confidence with which they asserted contrary things in the past. The others, the converts, have a life divided against itself; in respect of their religion they are each of them two and not one; nay, they are each two who are not even at peace with each other; their earlier faith is opposed to their later, and the more earnest they are and have been the more strongly opposed; they have spoken, argued, acted against their own present conviction, and in the present are engaged in controverting their own confident assertions of a former time; out of their own mouths can they be judged and condemned; “You

yourself," it has been said to me by way of unanswerable reply, "have believed and taught the very things you are now denouncing as incredible." Indeed, it might seem as if such men could not do better than pass upon themselves sentence of perpetual silence, to avoid the perpetual confusion of self-contradiction.

Yet they are of all men least inclined to be silent ; nor indeed by any, except those they have left, are they asked to refrain from speech. As a rule they are among the more earnest and thorough of all the adherents of the Church of their adoption, though often wanting in the staid conviction and quiet determination of those to whom it is the Church of their birth. They are not always welcome, not always wise, often extreme men ; yet of every religious body the state of vigour or languor may be tested by the proportion within it of these two classes. Where there are no converts it is evident sign that there is no life, no zeal, want of that power of appropriation and absorption which belongs to all living organisms. Where the converts are numerous, it is undeniable that the body has some force of attraction by which it draws to itself even those most averse to its claims, and if force be exercised without, then there must needs be life within it.

Therefore should every Church be proud of its converts, and the convert be neither ashamed of having changed, nor by any means allow himself to be silenced by his former self. "*Humanum est errare*"—it is like man to make mistakes ; that he condemns what once he approved, and convicts as false what formerly he devoted himself to as the very truth, only proves him a man. This much he should be always ready to admit ; the only inexcusable fault, after such varied experience as his life has brought him, is the fault of dogmatism, of setting up his later opinions as the final and absolute truth, and making it a reproach to others that they do not agree with him—a fault more unreasonable in a convert than in other men, and yet even more common in converts than in others.

The reason and the excuse of this fault is that they appreciate as others cannot the merits and advantages of their new faith, and so insist upon it more passionately. It was so with St Paul. He had been, as he tells us himself, "a Hebrew of the Hebrews," belonging to the strictest sect among them, a rigid observer of the law and tradition of the elders, having in special abhorrence the Christian heresy, which he was sagacious enough to see implied the eventual overthrow of Judaism, though at first it was not so understood or intended except by the most advanced of the party.

And he had become a Christian, and more advanced in his views than any of them had been before. Christ, he conceived, had brought freedom to men, freedom from the law whose restriction harassed every act of their lives; and when he found those whom he had himself brought to Christ willingly adopting these very burdens of doing and abstaining which Christ had delivered him from, he was overwhelmed with grief and astonishment and indignation and fear. "How turn ye back again to weak and beggarly rudiments" of religion, beginnings whereby ignorant men were trained to something of religious awe through continual observances? "Ye observe days and months and seasons and years"—sabbaths and new moons, and passovers and jubilees—"I am afraid of you lest by any means I have bestowed labour upon you in vain." So he pours out his heart's fullness of wrath and love in that immortal Epistle to the Galatians, the convert's indignant protest against the faith of which once he was so fervent an advocate.

It is therein every convert may find his own justification, for there is no reproach of change which can be brought against one of us which does not apply with even greater force to this man, the great Apostle whom all Christendom is of one mind to honour as the most devoted and most successful of its founders.

Nor was the change on Paul's part limited to that great and complete one by which he passed from a persecutor of Christians to be a preacher of the Christ. We may observe in his letters a constant growth of doctrine, and we may be sure that in later years he would not have repeated the crude assertions of the return of Jesus which we find in his earliest epistle, when he wrote, "The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, and we that are alive shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air."

Therefore we shall not be ashamed if with Paul, with Augustine, with Luther, with so many worthy men of our own day, we have changed and do change our faith. And yet if we are always changing, who shall rely upon us, or what reliance can we have even on ourselves? It is something to "stand fast," as Paul did, and so fervently exhorted the Galatians to do, it is something to discern what for certain we have gained, and to hold to it. It is much to do and to have done so, if all the while our ears are open to hear and our minds prepared to consider whatever is brought against our position; so that we hold on, not by a determination that we will do so, and will listen to nothing to the contrary, but by a conviction of reason—a conviction strengthened by every contrary argument honestly welcomed and meditated and refuted.

Therefore it was with satisfaction that I discovered the report of the speech which I made twenty-one years ago, at my welcome meeting in the same hall where we met to celebrate the completion of those years. It is a report evidently prepared for the press and corrected by myself, but I had forgotten all about it; and it was, I say, with satisfaction I read it, not unmixed with surprise, for having kept an open mind to every new argument or fact brought to my notice, I imagined that I had changed more since then than I have done.

It is a lifetime, literally the lifetime of many, since I spoke those words. I have nothing to change, nothing to retract, nothing to regret. I have found the welcome you gave me then extended through all these years and crowned the other night. I thank God for this opportunity which He has through you, given me to be the spokesman of a nobler faith, that He has called me, unworthy of the honour as I may be, to be a champion in these parts of the cause of freedom allied to faith, of progress guided and sobered by reverence and religion.

I reprint the report now, not because I am anywise proud of this unexpected evidence to my constancy, but simply as witness to the fact that entire freedom to change or develop, freedom such as I have enjoyed many years from all constraint or fear, does not entail changeableness. For twenty-one years from the time I began to think for myself, I felt bound always to this or that creed; like many people now, I could not conceive of a religion without a defined and obligatory dogma; and if I was not sure by which I ought to be bound, nor always obedient to the bond even when I recognised it, at all events I sought whereby I might bind myself securely, and be freed of doubt and change. And these twenty-one years were years of painful doubt and many changes. For twenty-one years now I have been free of any bond of duty or fear constraining me to believe or disbelieve, and all this time I have remained constant to the same fundamental convictions. These convictions, as expressed in my own words at the commencement of my ministry in Leeds, are here reprinted, with only a few trifling alterations, to make the sense clearer, and no omissions except of a few observations of merely local and temporary interest.

[Here follows his inaugural address of 1876, quoted in the text.]

So I spoke that night twenty-one years ago, venturing after much hesitation to accept of so responsible an office in a church to which I was a few months before a complete stranger. The change was very great; within the ministry of religion there scarcely



could be a greater. I make no promises for the future, and trust I shall always be faithful to the voice of reason and of duty ; but so far that change has been my last. I have found what I sought so long and painfully—not a divine church, not an infallible authority, not a creed which would impose silence on all doubts ; these were the wrong directions in which I looked for it—I have found full faith and perfect freedom. Faith, which is, I confess, not very “definite,” for I see now but “as in a mirror darkly,” but I see, nevertheless, and am not blind : freedom, to seek truth every way and everywhere, and, having found it, to accept it without reluctance and speak it without fear or favour.

My prayer is not that I may never change again, but that if I ever should, it may be through serious study and of full conviction, and not as a consequence of decaying powers or undue pressure on an enfeebled brain.

### III

#### THE FUTURE LIFE (1898)

BARTHOLOMEW DIAZ, whose name will be found on the map of Africa given to a prominent headland of the western coast, was the first to sail so far south. He came of a family of daring navigators who, one after another, had pushed forward maritime discovery, preparing by their achievements the way for the great work to be accomplished by their illustrious descendant. He set sail from Lisbon in the summer of 1486, and, keeping the coast well in view, succeeded in reaching the mouth of the Orange River, the furthest south yet attained. There Diaz was kept five days tacking to and fro, battling with contrary winds, and gave to the conspicuous point, which kept obstinately in face of them, the name which still it bears, Cabo Voltas, or Cape of Tacks. But now the wind changed, and for thirteen days they were driven before it southward, and out of sight of land. We can imagine faintly the fears which haunted them as day after day the tempest shrieked through the half-reefed sails and the terrors of an unknown world confronted them ; all the more that a strange and hitherto unheard-of phenomenon surprised them, for whereas all past mariners had found that it grew warmer the farther they went south, and tales were told of a torrid zone where the intense heat made life impossible, now it grew colder and colder the farther they were driven. At last the wind abated, and Diaz, never doubting but that the coast still ran north and south

(as it had done for the 2500 miles they had followed it since leaving the island of Fernando Po, in the Gulf of Guinea), steered towards the east to discover it, but, failing in that direction, turned northward, and finally reached Algoa Bay, and, first of Europeans, trod the land beyond the Cape. Santa Cruz, the rock of Holy Cross, he called a small island in the bay, and set up pillar and cross on it, and still by that name is it known. And there, indeed, he found his own cross of disappointment and seeming failure, for the crew, worn with fear and fatigue and anxiety, and dreading the heavy seas and surf-stormed shore, with one voice declared they would go no further; so their captain was forced to yield, and, with the long-coveted route to India open before him, turned his back upon it homeward. On the way they came in sight of the great cape so long hidden from the eyes of seafaring men, and, calling to mind how they must have been driven past it in the storm of a few weeks before, they gave it the name Cabo Tormentoso, or Cape of Storms.

So homeward bound they fared prosperously, and, reaching Portugal, gave account to the king of all they had seen and discovered. He was of English descent, this king, called John—I suppose after his great grandfather, John of Gaunt,—and so of the same blood with Edward III, and the Black Prince, and the victors of Cressy and Agincourt. He heard all they had to tell of the sufferings they had endured and perils they had encountered; and doubtless Diaz did not conceal from the king, who had sent him on the voyage in undiscovered seas, the bitter disappointment it had been to him to have been obliged to renounce the hope of discovering the way to India; and he told of that mighty cape whose brow the storm had hidden in clouds when first they passed it, and of the name they had given it, to recall to men who should thenceforth sail thereby the peril of their predecessors who first had dared those stormy waters and set eyes upon the great headland which was the end of the world. And the king approved all the brave captain had done, save only this naming of the cape. “Cabo Tormentoso, Cape of Storms! Would he so have called it for ever, because of the few stormy days he had there encountered? Nay, Cabo de buon Esperanza, Cape of Good Hope, should it be named, for assuredly a new world was opened up by its discovery, and ships should sail to and fro under it henceforth, bringing spices and gold of the Indies to the markets of the western world.”

Right noble scion of a noble house, he has left the world enduring memorial of his faith and courage, making the sea-girt cape his monument! And long since the dark cloud, which made those

southern seas so dread an object of contemplation to the men of old, has cleared. There, where they pictured that the realm of the wonted and natural ended and day ceased, and dread monsters tenanted a fathomless deep, there go the ships bearing thousands in safety and comfort to lands undreamt of by our forefathers. Now, there is scarce reserved at either pole, behind barriers of eternal ice, a last refuge for the mysterious and unknown. The round globe is navigated by our swift ships, and for a pleasure trip men make the circuit of it, no other condition being required except a few hundreds of pounds and a few months to spare. And not only is the surface of our planet known to us; heaven, too, has given up its secrets, and beyond the spheres, which they used to think enclosed the universe and revolved round the earth, our sight travels boundless distances and discovers new systems of suns and stars.

One world only still eludes our most earnest search, world very near to us, yet undiscoverable by keenest faculty of ours. It is the world beyond death, that land whither we are all together journeying; whither the great majority have already gone before, but from whose bourne there returns no traveller to tell us how it fares with them there. Between those Portuguese mariners and the Indies they sought their way to, lay thousands of miles of sea and long months of weary and perilous voyaging: thither none of men known to them had ever been, and it was doubtful if any of themselves would ever arrive, certain that they would meet strange men and scenes such as they had never looked on in all their travels before. How different our relation to that land of which so eagerly and so vainly we seek the tidings! For it is close to us, and so slight the boundary which divides the Here and Hereafter that we never know what instant of time the whole length of the voyage between the living and the dead may be crossed by us: and the only certainty of our lives is that some day, soon or late, we shall reach that other shore: and when we land we shall find it peopled, that unknown world, with those we have known so well, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, wives and husbands, friends and kinsfolk, nearest and dearest, crowding to greet us!

So near is it! so familiar does it sometimes seem! that far-off undiscovered land whither we are all of us surely voyaging, driven hither and thither often in contrary directions, yet all bound for the same port!

And as those mariners of old who in their frail barks made their way onward to southern seas, keeping the land in view to guide them and be assurance of the firm and stable, while waters rolled

beneath them and skies changed above; even so do we, while in these yet frailer bodies we make the voyage of life, keep in view the familiar and the known, the solid facts of existence which abide the same while all changes with us. Onward we drift from first birthday of our launching on life's waters; under storm and sunshine, with favouring winds and foul, past ever-varying scenes, the common places of human bliss and woe, naming as we go the more prominent landmarks—school, apprenticeship, first love, marriage, new arrivals, losses, troubles, adventures, success, and so forth—till the storm wind catches our sails, and we suffer and struggle longer or shorter time in vain, and are driven on till the shore is lost to view and . . . I know no more. *They* know, the many who used to worship with us here, whose grey heads were so familiar a feature of our Sunday morning meetings, by whose faith and generous gift this place was built fifty years ago, whose help was never wanting for its maintenance. *They know*,—but we? Would you have me tell you stories after the manner of pretenders to knowledge beyond human faculty? Would you have me beguile you with tales of the terrible and beautiful scenes which priests and poets of all ages have imagined there—tales of eternal torture and eternal bliss; of the drear regions over the entry to which is inscribed the motto "All hope abandon, ye who pass hereby"; of the bright lands above, the happiness of whose inhabitants is never troubled by thought of the misery which for ever overwhelms their friends of days gone by?

Nay, I have nought to tell of good or ill, nor will make pretence to know that of which I am profoundly ignorant. Had some home-returning merchantman hailed the ship of Vasco da Gama as he sped southwards, four hundred years ago, on his outward voyage, and asked of him what kind of country it was to which he was bound, and what manner of men and treatment he was going to meet, I suppose he would have replied that he knew nothing, nor could tell what awaited them in those new lands.

But he sailed on undaunted, though on that voyage it was free to him as it never is to us, to shift his sails and port his helm, and turn him home again. We *must* on, brave or cowards, frightened or of good cheer, drawing back or reaching forward, it matters nowise so far as the course is concerned—onward we speed, till at last we lose sight of land, and are lost sight of here.

What, then, shall we call it?—that last headland which is the end of the world known to us, world of the senses, world of home and of sunlight, of the known and familiar? Cabo Tormentoso,

Cape of Death's Agony, cloud-shrouded, storm-beaten, dark and terrible to contemplate? So men have been wont to picture it to themselves; "King of Terrors" they have crowned death, and done it the homage of dread. But the terrors are the invention of superstition and priestcraft. Death is natural as birth is, and as by the gates of birth we enter on all the varied experience of this life, so by death, doubtless, do we enter on fresh experience of life on the other side.

"Cape of Good Hope, let it be called henceforth, O too fearful mariners!" said the king of old; "for beyond it lie seas which have never yet borne ship's keel, lands whose riches are yet unexplored, and all shall be ours." Good Hope, the brave king conceived, of a New World of which this land had long barred the way, but his hope fell far short of the wonders yet to be revealed; for was it possible for him to dream of the island continent of Austral seas and her attendant isles, and of colonies and kingdoms of white men to be founded in centuries to come beyond his cape, and of western civilisation and western religion to be borne far beyond the Indies to unknown empires of the East?

Cape of Good Hope, let us call it, the last we see of this life, for if we know nothing, neither will we anything doubt. O brother mariners mine, you all who sail with me this stormy sea of life, bound for the port we know not, "I beseech you all be of good cheer"; I have no vision to tell you, I have received no message but what comes to every listening ear of man, only "I believe God," and find therein fullest contentment for all my questions. For God is almighty, and God is just and good, and that which will be, will be even as He orders it, and all must be well. Nay, better than we can dream it to be, for if the best things should be accomplished which poets have ever promised—if rest were there for ever unbroken, and pleasures with no interval of pain, and everlasting triumph over sin and death—oh, might it not happen that we should grow weary of eternal repose, of unceasing song of victory, of perfection itself? Might it not be—if we were still ourselves, would it not certainly be the case—that from heaven's peaceful battlements we should look down, and sigh for the combat and the toil, combat which makes victory so welcome, toil which alone makes rest so sweet? I know not; but this know, that God's dominion is wider than my imagination can conceive, and that He will do more for His children than the utmost they can desire or deserve.

So I speed onward, while the wind blows and abates never; onward, passing cape after cape, never to see them again, past

Babyhood, Childhood, Youth, left so far behind; before me the pillar which one of old erected on the headland, "threescore-and-ten," to warn all that the end was near; near, yes, even if perchance the coast be stretched out to fourscore years. And then the Cape of Good Hope rounded, and God's new world in sight! New thoughts, new experiences, new opportunities, and the old friends parted with so long!

Good Hope? It were a Gospel indeed if only true; but it is on this, above all, that teachers of the Gospel are divided. About things in heaven we should have little concern, we who dwell on earth; about the things which happened long ago, and in a strange land we could easily agree to differ—were it not that these things outside of all our experience are so involved in our future prospects. But is there Good Hope for all, or is it only for those who have believed right, and lived innocently, or repented truly? for mis-believers and misdoers expectation of misery unending? Great and terrible question: yet which has for answer this certainty, that God does what is right, and that man cannot wish for better than that the right should be done. "Wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that worketh evil" (Romans ii. 9); how should it be otherwise, and evil not produce evil? Or for immunity from the just consequence of sin would we overturn the universe and substitute chaos for God? And yet, Good Hope! for the Judge Himself is the All-Good, the All-Merciful, and evil cannot endure for ever under His Eternal Sway, and Good must be the end of all, for that God is God!

Therefore, O comrades on life's sea, in God's name I bid you "Be of good cheer." Hope and fear not, for God is over all, and God is our Father, and God is just and good.

#### IV

#### SWORD AND TROWEL (1906)

WE of Mill Hill have been always in opposition. In the early days they had to contend for the bare right of existence, for liberty to worship according to the dictates of their own reason and conscience. When so much was conceded to Nonconformists it was yet long before they obtained the common privileges of citizenship. And throughout, while we were with other dissenters in opposing

the claims of the Church, we were under constant obligation to defend ourselves against them too when attacked for our defection from the old orthodoxy. . . .

With the duties of to-day I complete thirty years of service as minister of this historic chapel. I am proud of the office, distinguished as it has been by Dr Priestley and so many other men of piety and learning. But of my own performance as preacher and pastor I am in no wise proud. "Ye, when ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants : we have done that which it was our duty to do." Few of us dare say so much ; for my part I had rather lead you in the "general confession" which the Prayer Book directs "to be said of the whole congregation after the minister"—"We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done." I dare not even say I have done the best that was in me, for that were to boast that I had done all God or man could require of me.

Yet am I thankful to have had the ability, to have had the opportunity given to me here, to have had the good will, to do something. It might have been so much more. From the vantage-ground of this pulpit, which has been "a centre of light and leading" in the city, a man of greater worth might have done distinguished service in the cause of humanity and true religion. But as we get older we come to accept ourselves for what we are, acknowledge with thanksgiving our two talents, and do not regret that five have not been allowed to us, are satisfied if the result of our trading with them has been to make even one talent by way of profit to the kingdom of God on earth.

If I might indulge for a moment a vain and perhaps a cowardly wish, it would be that I had been a man of peace, that I could have "gone to the house of God with the throng" of my neighbours, that my voice might mingle in harmony "with the voice of joy and praise of the multitude keeping holyday." Or, if that might not be, then that I might escape "from the stormy wind and tempest, might fly away and be at rest" in some sanctuary of learning and devotion, undisturbed by the tumult of tongues.

With the great prophet of Judah I have at times been disposed to lament : "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention." In religion, which has been the dominant interest of my life, I have never been with the majority, never been at peace with those I honoured and loved, have from youth upwards been separated by contrary beliefs from

those to whom I was allied by the dearest ties of kindred. And my experience has been as that of Jeremiah and many a humble witness for God: "If I say, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name"—I will leave controversy to those who love it, and be silent about the things on which good men differ,—“then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire, and I am weary with forbearing and I cannot contain.”

To this was I born. As other men to other office, great or insignificant, to be statesmen or to be clerks, so I to be minister of this place. And I have received from my predecessors sword and trowel, tradition of readiness to fight against error and wrong, and “so labour with sword girded by my side.”

And for this all the previous years of my life were preparation, though I knew it not and should have been frightened had it been told me. By varied experiences of the past I have been fitted for this post as far as I was capable of it at all. In this one respect I have the advantage over wiser and better men—for advantage it is, even though it be made a reproach to me—that I have had such varied experience of many forms of religion as they can be known thoroughly only by those who devoutly accept and conform to them. I was brought up an Evangelical Protestant, free of all sectarian allegiance. I was taught that all mankind was divided into believers and unbelievers, the converted and unconverted, the people of God and the world; and from my early childhood it was my earnest desire, stimulated by frequent fear of hell, that I too might be numbered with “the saints.” As I grew towards manhood I became doubtful and dissatisfied, and sought in the fold of the Anglican Church the helps to devotion and the sense of security which my early faith did not supply. Thence I was driven, sorely against my will and doing violence to every instinct of natural affection, but by what I believed then and still believe to be a logical necessity, into the Church of Rome. To my new faith I gave myself with all the ardour of a convert who had suffered much to gain it. For ten years I trod my doubts under foot and forced every thought into obedience to the Church. Then again faith tried so long failed me: I faced the spectre of doubt, and was overcome in free fight. I was left awhile as a rudderless ship drifting with wind and current, till at last I came to the harbour of a religion which leaves thought free and commends fullest inquiry without check of foregone conclusion and yet maintains faith in God and man. I found at last that which I had been seeking so long—a religion which imposes upon its adherents no



hard doctrine nor requires submission to creed or confession but leaves minister and people alike free to worship.

Once in my days of spiritual desolation, when I was for a while without hope and without faith I composed for myself an epitaph in Latin of which the first lines were :—

“*Errore prope infinito perfatigatus  
Hic demum requiescit.*”

“Worn out with almost infinite wandering,” for had I not traversed the broad ocean of speculation, passed to and fro from absolute unbelief to the most devout credulity, and visited its every coast and found no rest, nor looked for it except in death? But long since I have repudiated this my own sentence on my life as happily proved false, and my song of thanksgiving is, “Thou hast set my feet upon a rock and established my goings.” I have discovered the foundations for which I had been feeling all my life, upon which men build their various systems of religion, useful all of them as refuges for weary or aspiring souls, not content or capable without some such covert and support. I would not abolish any of them were it in my power, leaving homeless those who found therein peace and consolation. Rather would I, if I could, establish, purify, enlighten, every temple in which the Highest was sought and worshipped. I would not strive, I would not presume even to pray, that all men should believe as I believe and worship in the manner which commends itself to me. I would only that all should be free, and respect the freedom of their neighbours otherwise minded to themselves, and all seek to know and to do the will of the Father in heaven.

To this have I come as the end of all my wanderings, and have girt me as with the mason’s apron and taken the trowel in hand and buckled sword to my side. And this is what I have made it my life’s work to uphold and defend—that the Infinite in whom we move “as motes in summer sky” is conscious of us as is a father of his little children, that the All-Mighty is All-Loving, that whatever is good and beautiful in earth or man is of His shining there, that evil is the shadow which hides Him from us and, like a shadow, must pass away. . . .

Soon my name will be added to the list of the Mill Hill ministers of the past. May it be worthy of its place in no mean company! And may my successors and all who come after, differing as they will in opinion from those who have gone before, maintain always the same unchanging faith in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man!

## V

## "LAST WORDS" (1912)

IF I knew that this was to be my last morning here, what would I say to you ?

Since I first preached from this pulpit—next month it will be twenty-four years ago—I have learnt much, I have not changed much. That is nothing to be proud of ; I have never been able to appreciate the boast some make that they have held the same opinions in religion or politics all their lives. It is good to change a dozen times, if each change is for the better, and very evil to be consistently in the wrong. So I merely state it as a fact. I do not think there is any sermon I have preached here which I would recall as false to my present convictions, though I should certainly be glad were it possible to alter, or withdraw, one and another incautious or inconsiderate statement.

And I might, perhaps, be tempted to sum up what I have taught here as to the Being of God, and our relations to Him ; as to Jesus Christ, and what we owe to His life and teaching ; as to the life of the world to come, what we do and what we do not know of it ; as to good works, which make all the worth of life here ; as to hearty good will towards our brethren of other Churches, and earnest effort at the same time on behalf of our own Church. I am not aware that in respect to any of these greatest matters I should have to retract any word I have spoken from this pulpit ; and I might try to compress the teaching of many years in fewest and dearest words so that they might be remembered of you all when I was gone.

Yet I do not think I would do this. I should hesitate whether it would be fair to my unknown successor, that he should find you so strongly prepossessed in favour of a way of thinking which might not, perhaps, be his. For even those who agree the best see things from different points of view, and lay different emphasis on what both believe to be truth. And it might even be that you might choose for a minister one who did not at all agree with my views, and might at the same time be the very best teacher and pastor you could get.

It would be otherwise if I were—to use an expression of the late good Earl of Carnarvon—"devotedly orthodox," *i.e.* if I were absolutely certain that my thoughts about God and man were the very truth. But I have no such conviction ; and I have ever put my

ideas before you as the best I had to offer, which you were not to accept from me, but make what use you could of for your own profit. So I would desire to leave whoever should come after me free from even the shadow of obligation to me, which he could not but feel if he came, a young man, and found you inheriting as my last message a doctrinal legacy. What, then, would I say?

What better could I find than this, "Finally, brethren," now that my ministry has come to an end, and you will hear my voice no more, "fare ye well, be united, be of good cheer, be comforted, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

I would that my voice might outlive me, and these my words of counsel—not mine, indeed, but Paul's—be continually heard here and diligently heeded. I would that this benediction, earnest of a good will which death will not extinguish, might reach this Mill Hill congregation when in years to come it will consist of those who know me only by name or, for the most part, do not know me at all. O dear brethren ours, of fifty, of a hundred years hence—who will know so much we are ignorant of, and yet can know no more than we of the way of true happiness,—“be united, live in peace,” and may the God of love and peace be in your midst filling you with inspiration to all good word and work.

And to you, my fellow-worshippers, you who with me share these years on earth, I say now, and would say if certified that I should never again address you, just what Paul wrote eighteen hundred years ago to the Corinthians. Briefly these two admonitions: “Be united; be of good cheer.”

It has been the happy lot of this congregation that there is on record in its two hundred and thirty years of history only one single instance of trouble and division. One minister there was, of the sixteen who have in turn occupied the pulpit, who, though a man of profound learning and genuine piety, was too narrow and dogmatic to suit the congregation. It was his sectarian spirit and animosity to the National Church which drove Ralph Thoresby from the chapel, never to return. But that was more than two centuries ago. We have had no second Dr Manlove.

There will always be differences of opinion among us, at least as long as there is any life. Men and women who think for themselves will not all think alike; and where pastor and people are related by terms of mutual friendship and respect, and neither seeks to dictate to the other what is to be taught or believed, there, it is certain, will arise differences, and even grave differences at times, on matters of

faith. But with an established tradition of liberty, such as was wanting, of course, and not as yet understood or appreciated, in the early years of our church, there is no reason why the bond of peace and good will should not stand the strain of wide diversity of conviction. "Be united," brethren, now and always. Some there will ever be who are naturally conservative and look back to the past and seek to retain all they can of older doctrines; others incline to new thoughts and welcome every new discovery in the field of religious history; some are full of earnestness and faith, some not naturally of a religious disposition—there are such varieties in all congregations; they are more pronounced among us, because, instead of reproving, we welcome them. We do not set up a type of feeling or belief to which we would have all conform. We gladly recognise with the Apostle "diversities of gifts," and we know that God is served not only by Sunday-school teachers and lay preachers and regular attendants at public worship, but also by honourable politicians and good citizens who take their shares of all public work, and by all who do their best according to the measure of ability they possess. So the freedom which we have inherited and so devotedly cherish is no way opposed to unity, but should make, rather, in favour of it. Dissension comes—as it came in Dr Manlove's day—from the desire to impose our opinions upon others; we insist that they should believe what we think true and do what we judge to be right. We presume to set up our own judgment as the rule by which to try them, and, of course, they resent our presumption. But if we are agreed to respect in each man the reason and conscience by which he is bound not to us but to God—there will be no difficulty about union, however great the differences. All will worship "the same Spirit, who works in all and divides to each one his portion of good even as he will."

So though we are not bound together by any profession of common faith such as unites other Churches, yet may we be even more closely than they united together if we all seek after what is true and good; and fear it, as the sin of sacrilege, to interfere with another's liberty and responsibility to God alone.



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